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The LEADING FEATURES of this number are:

Marion Harland's "JUDITH."

"IN TENEBRIS." A Poem. By William Shields Liscomb. (Illustrated by A. Brennan.)

"ROSE OF THE WORLD." By Julia F. Magruder.

"ALL OUT-DOORS." (Adornment of small country places). By the Author of "The House that Jill Built." (Illustrated.)

"KAREN." A Scandinavian Story. By Lewis West.

Helen Campbell's "WHAT-TO-DO CLUB," for girls.

A. W. Tourgée on "Americanism in Literature," "The Trade Dollar," "Governmental Investigations," etc.

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THE CONTINENT

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PHILADELPHIA, AUGUST 15, 1883.

Whole No. 79.

JUDITH: A CHRONICLE OF OLD VIRGINIA.

BY MARION HARLAND.

Author of "Alone," "The Hidden Path," "Common Sense in the Household," "Eve's Daughters," etc.

CHAPTER IX.



MAN walked up the aisle of the church with a horse-block on his shoulder. A horse-block—be it known to the modern citizen—is a log of wood sawed across the grain and set upright on the ground, to be used by women and short-legged boys in mounting to their saddles. There was always one large one, with

two or three lower logs arranged as steps, near every church-door. Several single-barreled ones stood under the trees at Old Singinsville, varying in height from eighteen inches to two-and-a-half feet. One of these, a stout block of hickory, the late comer lowered from his shoulder in the open space surrounding the pulpit—the chancel on Episcopalian Sundays—and close to the big iron stove that heated the building. This settled to his liking, he shook himself like a water-dog, and a camlet cloak of red-and-green plaid dropped away from him, displaying a full suit of yellow flannel—an ugly, vicious, brimstone yellow, almost matched by a head of coarse, foxy hair. His skin had the hard flush of the habitual drunkard. Not a glimpse of white showed above a black stock, and on his feet were boots of undressed calfskin of the same general complexion as his clothes.

He was an eerie and revolting apparition in the well-dressed and well-mannered congregation. Captain Macon half arose from his seat, his fingers closing nervously on his riding-whip, when the cloak fell off, perhaps in resentment of the possible caricature of his scarlet coat. Every gentleman in the house was on the alert to check more overt insult to the place and audience. Thus far, the man had not laid himself open to reproof or chastisement. His garb was peculiar in color, but so was Captain Macon's, and since the benches were all full he had a right to provide a seat for himself. He was perfectly grave in aspect, even when he put both feet on the low box filled with sand surrounding the stove, took

a handful of peanuts—otherwise "ground" or "goober-pens"—from his pocket, and began to eat them vigorously, tossing the shells among the tobacco-quids, in various stages of desiccation, that besprinkled the sandy surface.

Some present knew enough of him to grasp the situation at sight. His name was Roger Jones; but he had deservedly won the title of "Rowdy Roger" by drunken pranks and general disreputableness. In July of this year he had disturbed the decorum of a "protracted meeting" by unseemly antics, and been severely and publicly rebuked by Mr. Dudley. The fellow had stood up in his place and offered to fight the preacher then and there.

"Sit down, young man!" was the stinging retort. "I am too busy with bigger game—to wit, the devil—to waste time mashing fleas."

The poor creature had actually obeyed in utter abashment, under the stern eyes of the speaker and the laugh called forth by the reply, but from that day had cudged his fuddled brains to devise fresh means of persecution of his opponent, following him from place to place to practice low tricks by which to distract the notice of Mr. Dudley's congregations without putting himself within reach of the law. Those of the audience who had not heard the story supposed him to be a lunatic or fool, without suspecting the animus of the witless freak.

Not a line of the minister's face betrayed consciousness of his entrance. When the increasing solemnity of tone and manner recalled the senses of his hearers, he was using Sodom as a type of the city of destruction, and describing three classes who were warned to escape therefrom.

First, the openly profane and reckless, as illustrated by Lot's sons-in-law, and the vain fellows composing the nocturnal mob.

Secondly, those who hearing the alarm heeded it so far as to begin their flight, then turned again with longing to their sins. *Vide* Lot's wife.

Thirdly, worldly, careless Christians, who had been lured by wealth and pleasure into dwelling in the tents of wickedness, and were saved, so as by fire. He said "by the skin of their teeth."

"We will deal with these last first," he continued when the heads were stated. "I have been given to understand that they are as plentiful in these fat low-grounds an' rich tobacco lands 'round about Old Singinsville as persimmons in Fluvanna, an' watermillions in Hanover, an' sweet potatoes in Nansemond County. Spiritual laziness has been the natural consequence o' high livin' ever sence Jeshurum waxed fat an' kicked after he'd been fed upon honey an' oil, butter, milk,

fat lambs, wheat flour an' the juice o' the grape. I haven't seen more store clothes in a country church in a month o' Sundays than I am lookin' at now. Jeremiah mought 'a' made out his list o' the contraptions worn by the daughters o' Zion in his time without budgin' from these pulpit-steps, writin' on a sheet o' paper laid on the top o' his hat."

He told us how "Lot, half-hearted toward God, whole-hearted toward Mammon, vexed his soul from day to day with his neighbors' unlawful deeds, yet stood it out because he made money out o' these sinners. He had driven a sharp bargain with easy old Abraham when he chose the plain o' Jordan, watered like the garden of the Lord, an' let the uncle that had brought him up—an orphan boy—scratch a livin' out o' the sand an' broom-straw of Mamre. It never entered the smart Jew's head that the Lord would use the dusty roads in which Abraham traveled ankle-deep to give him some notion of the multitude of his descendants; that the sandy bottoms where he'd pitched his tent under the one scrub-oak that could make out to live there would be trodden by His blessid feet. It's a pretty safe thing, in the long run, to trust the Almighty for bread and butter. There's hundreds that call themselves believers who can't do that. They look out for their bodies, but commit the keepin' o' their souls unto Him. I don't know, sometimes, but 'twould be fa'r to take their souls at their own valuation, ef we're to judge from the care they take of 'em. In that case, forty-seven of 'em could play 'prisoner's base' on a seed-tick's back, an' never hit each other's elbows!"

He painted Lot "lingerin', lingerin', loath to travel with his foot in his hand, as the sayin' is, when he had money in the Sodom an' Gomorrah bank, besides real estate, an' nobody knows how many head o' cattle. Lingerin' an' whinin' until even the angels los' patience, an'—mark the words!—the Lord being merciful unto him, they laid holt o' him an' dragged him out by the nape o' the neck. Then in the plain, the comin' tempest bellowin' in the distance, he begged to be allowed to go to Zoar. 'Sech a little bit of a town!' he argers. 'Hardly worth the trouble o' burnin' up, nor the brimstone 'twould take to do it!' But it was a city, an' he didn't take to the notion o' livin' in the mountains, where thar warn't a neighbor in half a mile. That's Jew all over! To this day they've no taste for the country. Trade in men's souls ain't lively enough for them there. Not that country Christians don't improve their opportunities for backslidin'. An' wagons ain't apt to stall goin' down hill, even in sech stiff mud as that in the road leading to the creek yonder. The devil knows he can take care of the lead horse when the load gets fa'rly started down.

"But you'll tell me that Lot was saved; that he couldn't be lost, seein' he was truly a child o' God; that your callin' an' election's sure. Ef thar's one trick meaner 'n another upon the pock-marked face o' this cranky old earth, it is sneakin' behind the 'perseverance o' the saints' in order to have an excuse for sin. The Lord has you under the covert o' His wings; tharfore you can wound the Saviour in the house o' His friends. He's drawn you out o' the horrible pit an' the miry clay an' set your feet upon the Rock of Ages—an' you cut a pigeon-wing to the scrapin' o' Satan's fiddle! Now, let me give you a plain piece o' my mind! The man that can reason an' feel in that way had better look mighty keeful at his 'listment papers. Maybe, my easy citizen o' Zion, you've got holt o' the wrong dockermment. Somebody else has been called, an' you've answered; an' as for your election, it won't stan' in the

Supreme Court. A real believer don't want to sin. Put that in your pipe an' smoke it! I can't think so bad o' Lot, money-worshippin' Jew as he was, as to b'lieve that he ever put it squar' before him that he was doin' wrong. You recollect the man in 'Pilgrim's Progress' that was robbed on the road to the Celestial City? The thieves didn't get his jewels—that is, his title-deeds to heaven. They were hid too safe. But they stole all his spendin'-money—the loose change he had for travelin' expenses, tavern fare, an' horse hire an' so on. That's the way with you sleepy, take-it-comfortably, yea-nay Christians. You are beggin' your way to the New Jerusalem. On Sundays you get a bone the Marster has thrown over His shoulder from one o' the children's plates. You pick up a dry crust of a hoe-cake at a pra'r-meetin'. Onct in a while, at a rousin' revival, when others are enjoyin' a feast o' fat things, you say, 'Thanky, my Marster!' for a fa'r plate o' bacon an' greens. You are never full—never in good order. Your ribs stare you in the face, an' you deefen the ears o' the Lord's faithful ones with the howls o' 'My leanness! my leanness!' I haven't a doubt now that ef the eyes o' all in this house could be opened this blessed minute to discern spirital bodies, we should see about us enough rack-a-bone skeletons, festooned with filthy rags o' self-righteousness, to scare away all the crows this side o' the Blue Ridge."

His dealing with the almost-saved was yet more faithful, and mingled with a tenderness of protest that found no place in his treatment of avowed scoffers—defiant blasphemers.

"Brother Watts!" he said abruptly, turning to him, "please open that Bible at the tenth Psalm, thirteenth verse, and first clause o' the fourteenth, an' rise up an' read what you find thar. Thar may be some here who wouldn't b'lieve that I read it right."

He stepped aside. Mr. Watts, in no wise disconcerted by the singular requisition, got up and spread the bulky volume on the sloping shelf. While he turned the leaves slowly in quest of the passage, we heard the cracking of the goober-pea shells in the horny fingers of the man in yellow, the crunching of the nuts between his jaws, so profound was the silence. Mr. Watts' quavering wail gave the solemn words:

"Wherefore do the wicked contemn God? He hath said in his heart, Thou wilt not require it!"

"Thou hast seen it! For Thou beholdest mischief and spite to requite it with Thy hand."

"Thank you, brother!" Mr. Dudley advanced again to the front. "Now, how many of you noticed next to the last word in that first sentence—that word, 'contemn'?" Thar's another word so much like it in sound, I'm afraid some o' you mought not 'a' understood that thar's a *t*, an' not a *d* in this one. It means to neglect, to treat slightly, to despise. The wicked contemn God. He hath said in his heart, 'Thou wilt not require it.' Require *what*? The slights you've heaped upon His word, upon His Sabbath, upon His laws, upon the mercy an' love an' bloody sacrifice o' His blessid Son. You've gone swingin' 'long the middle o' the road, whistlin' jig-tunes, kickin' opportunities an' privileges an' warnin' judgments out o' the way like they were so many gravel-stones, trampin' down all holy an' precious things like you would gimsen-weed an' pursley. But there is One who has seen and kept tally o' every despised offer o' grace, every chance o' salvation. The time is comin' in which you'll see 'em all ag'in, piled into a mountain whose top shall reach the skies, thunderin' an' lightnin' like Sinai, an' fallin' over on your frightened soul to bury it a million fathoms

deep in the bottomless pit. 'An' the smoke of their torment ascended up forever.' Thar'll be no end to the burnin' o' that Sodom, not even a Dead Sea of forgetfulness to put out the fire and the memory of them who are wallowin' in it. You have laughed when your mother or your wife begged you with strong cryin' an' tears to stop in your evil courses. My merry friend, the Lord has put those tears in His bottle, an' every drop will be a blister upon your naked soul. Each slighted prayer and sermon will hang like a mill-stone about your neck, while you're sinkin' down! down! down! You have 'pooh-poohed!' at the prayers an' warnin's an' teachin's o' God's ministers, puffin' them away like boys blow off dandelion seed, but the harvest shall be a heap in that day o' grief an' desperate sorrow. Oh, my soul! enter not thou into the secret of him who destroys himself, who laughs an' jokes while he slams the door of mercy in his own face, locks it an' throws away the key!

"For He will require it! Mark that! He has seen it. Mischief an' spite to requite it with His hand. Do you know what that means? Have you ever pulled up long enough on the down-hill road to say to yourself what the weight o' that hand is? The Hand that measures the heavens as you shut your fingers 'round your wine-glass; that taketh up the isles like you pinch up the few grains o' powder you spilt on the table in loadin' your gun; that holds the seas as you scoop up water from a spring in your palm. Dare you resk a blow from it? I want you to put that question to yourself in silence one minute. Go down on the knees of your heart, while all these Christian friends are prayin' for you, an' say in your soul, 'I have *condemned* Thee, Most Holy an' Most Mighty! Unless I repent Thou wilt *condemn* me. Can I endure it?'"

He drew out his watch and fixed his eyes on it. The stillness was dreadful. Eye, intonation and gesture showed the man to be in awful earnest. Those who were disposed at first to smile at his homely similes were grave enough by now. Sixty seconds ticked audibly by. Miss Harry Macon said afterward that they sounded to her like "Going! going! gone!" Rowdy Roger discharged a rattling handful of empty shells at the broadside of the stove, and champed noisily on a fresh supply of nuts, cocking his head on one side to leer at the preacher, like an impudent yellow-hammer.

Mr. Dudley put up the watch in his fob, began to speak again in a studiously quiet tone.

"I think it was Mr. Whitefield who, at the close of a sermon, called out to the recording angel he knew was thar, 'though he couldn't see him: 'Gabriel, wait one minute longer, and take to Heaven the news of the repentance an' pardon of at least *one* soul!' My hearers, that angel wouldn't 'a' stopped the nine-hundred-an'-ninety-ninth part of a second at the biddin' of all the Whitefields an' Wesleys an' Knoxes an' Summerfields that ever preached. Sence the Apostles fell asleep thar have been no Joshuas in the pulpit. The minute I have jus' counted is gone as completely as that which heard the click o' the hasp that fastened down Noah into the ark. It's one of the drops of the ocean of eternity past, of whose number the Almighty, who was and is, and is to be, keeps account.

"I looked onct at a drop o' water in a microscope, an' it was *alive!* full o' squirmen', creepin', feelin' things. The man that owned the instrument said ef it had been a stronger glass we could 'a' seen thousands more, every one with life an' organs of its own. Thar's no stronger lens than the eye of the Judge an' Maker o' us all. He saw in that drop o' time that slipped

down while we were silent, all that passed in the hearts o' this congregation. The prayers an' longin's o' Christians over the dyin' souls about them; the sneers an' callousness of them that are past feelin'; maybe—I pray that in infinite mercy this may have been!—the outstretched hand of some drownin' wretch, as he cried, '*Lord, save, or I perish!*'"

The abrupt change of voice to impassioned supplication, the clasped hands uplifted, as were the streaming eyes, wrought powerfully upon the aspect of the crowd. Heads went down as bowed by a mighty wind; forms shook with emotion; there was a sound of low sobbing and deep-drawn breaths throughout the house. The man in yellow stretched arms and jaws in a huge yawn, and addressed himself to an ostentatious examination of every pocket for one more peanut, drawing forth, at flourishing length, a red bandana handkerchief, jack-knife, wallet and a dozen miscellaneous articles, depositing them one by one in the hat between his knees.

"The showman told us another curious thing," pursued the speaker. "His was a solar microscope, an' he said thar were times when the sun was very hot an' the lenses very strong, that the weakly critturs among them in the drop o' water—the things that had fewest organs an' senses—*died* in crossin' the focus. The glare an' heat were more'n they could stand. My dear friends, return thanks with me that God is more merciful than man. Ef He wasn't, what chance would there be of life; what hope of escape from blazin', shrivelin' up and annihilation under the burnin'-glass o' His indignation for a yaller imp o' the Evil One, who, on the birthday of the King of Glory, comes to His holy temple to insult His servants, an' to *chaw goober-peas!*"

The slow sweep of his arm consecrated the mean, defaced interior into a house of prayer; the box in which he stood was an altar from which he, the sword-bearer of the Spirit, the priest of the Most High, convicted the godless reptile, cowering under his blazing eyes, of sacrilege. Before the electric shock had so far subsided as to allow the auditors to perceive the comical side of the diatribe, he joined his hands and bent his head:

"Let us pray!"

Nearly all present fell upon their knees. I entered that hour into the meaning of a phrase already familiar to my ear—"wrestling in prayer." One was impressed irresistibly in listening to him, with the figure of a man fastening with clutching hands upon the King's robe, while plea and petition rushed to the lips almost too fast for utterance. As he implored an extension of the day of grace for the hardened offender who had played so conspicuous a part in the foreground of the morning scene, furtive steps passed down the aisle. A moment later the clattering of hoofs was heard among the grave-stones, the thud and splash of a gallop down the muddy road. Rowdy Roger was nowhere to be seen when we arose to receive the benediction.

The dispersion of a Virginia country congregation in those times was a curious spectacle to Northern eyes. Horses had been detached from carriages and gigs and tied to fences and trees, there to stand at ease during divine service. Some minutes were consumed in making them ready and bringing them up in turn to the entrance of the church. This interval, and often a much longer time, were passed in social greetings and kindly converse among neighbors and friends. No sooner was the "Amen!" of dismissal pronounced than a general hand-shaking began, the occupants of the pews leaning forward or back to address those near them, without leaving their places. Old or infirm ladies often sat down again to await the summons to their chariots.

Some elderly men strolled out to see that horses were unhitched and brought up. Younger cavaliers were prone to linger in lively chat with favorite belles, or pleasant exchange of compliments with mothers and chaperones. The outward procession was leisurely conducted, cronies gossiping, their faces under one another's bonnets; gay youths, carrying their hats in hands cast carelessly behind them, heads bent in attention or homage, escorted sweet-voiced, frank-eyed girls down the aisle and steps and handed them into their carriages. No lady was suffered to step in or out of the door unassisted. There were always those on each side of the church steps ready to perform this gallant service alike for acquaintance and stranger.

Our home-party was divided into two bands. Grandma, Aunt Betsey, my mother and little Bessie, my sister, were bestowed in the Trueheart carriage. In that belonging to Summerfield were Aunt Maria, Miss Virginia, myself; and, just as the door was closing, Miss Harry Macon tripped up, with the petition that she might have a seat with us as far as the cross-roads.

"We have two tabbies in our carriage to-day. I want to escape for half an hour from spit and purr," she said when we were in motion. "Don't let Sid hear me, or he'll tomahawk—or preach to—me when we get home," with a mock-timid glance at her grave brother, riding at Aunt Maria's window. "Aunt Deborah Macon and Aunt Peggy Branch arrived unexpectedly last night. I never knew such unexpected people! They always remind me of death in that respect—if in no other. They hate one another dearly, and met just at our outer gate. Neither would turn back for fear of pleasing the other."

"I saw them in church," remarked Aunt Maria. "We shall be happy to see them with you to-morrow. Will you ask them to excuse the informality of the invitation?"

"They shall die rather than come!" returned the beauty tranquilly. "I would administer rat's-bane with my own fair hands. I have been counting upon to-morrow's fun for weeks past, and the lives of a couple of spinsters aunts would not weigh the eighth of an ounce in the balance against the fulfillment of my wishes. Di can't come, poor thing! She has one of her sore throats—the seventeenth since we got home last September. That's all the White Sulphur is good for! Sid, Rod and I will be with you, whether or no, and the sweet maidens will eat their Christmas dinner with Papa. Both call him 'Brother,' both are slightly deaf and very sensitive on the score of the infirmity, and the dear, miserable man will roar first at one, then the other, and beg pardon when they start back and say in the same breath, 'My dear brother, one would suppose me to be hard of hearing from the way you pitch your voice!' Aunt Deborah is the woman who has never been seen with uncovered head since she put on caps at forty. She sleeps in my room, and always blows out the candle before she changes her day-cap for that she wears at night. Or, when I will sit up and read, keeping one eye on her, she steps out into the passage, and comes back night-capped."

Sidney Macon leaned toward us, his hand on the window-frame, leaving his horse, experienced in such attendance, to pick his way over the ruddy ruts of the road, avoiding as best he could collision with the wheels.

"What is she saying?" he asked, smiling indulgently at the rattle-pate.

"Making herself most entertaining, as usual," replied Miss Virginia, readily and prettily.

The Richmond girl was as popular with her own sex

as with the other—an uncommon circumstance when one is an acknowledged belle. Her pouts and coquetries were so palpably feigned, she was so watchful of the comfort of all, elderly and young, so generous in the division with other women of the attentions that fell abundantly to her lot, so quick to say and to do gracious things, that malice and envy could not thrive in the balminess of her presence. She overlooked nobody and forgot nothing that was said to her. Her outward life was a study of peace on earth, good-will to men, with a liberal inclusion of women. She basked in and absorbed sunlight as her natural aliment; radiated it in lambent gleams, after the manner of some affluent tropical flowers.

Miss Harry Macon sat opposite on the back seat, confessedly the handsomest girl in our county. Eighteen years old, taller by half a head than Miss Virginia and by an inch than Aunt Maria, straight as a palm, with a willowy grace of figure and movement; great gray eyes, black with the shadowing of curlin lashes; spirited and almost faultless features; with a gay audacity of temper and tongue that mocked at rebuke and restraint—she was the motive-power in her home, the crowned leader of her little clique. She had been christened "Harriet Byron," in admiring recollection of the precise pink of maidenly affectation who writes out her own praises, virtues and conquest in the romance lauded by Captain Macon in his ill-fated wooing. The name suited her as well as a Quaker cap would have become the sparkling face, that had fun in every flash and roguishness in each dimple. The alteration to the semi-masculine sobriquet, to which she had answered from babyhood, was inevitable. Her sister, Diana Vernon, was, by a like contrariety of happening, a shy invalid, who seldom appeared abroad.

Miss Harry sported that day a costume more conspicuous than it would be now—a black cloth gown, fitting as closely as a riding-habit, high in the neck, and with tight sleeves, while every other woman at church who made any pretense of following the fashion wore huge puffs between shoulders and elbows, often expanded by frames of buckram and wire. Her wrists and neck were trimmed with fur. A band of the same bordered her black hat, from the crown of which drooped a long scarlet feather. Her straight skirt, following the outlines of her lissome figure, fell to her feet in classic folds. Miss Virginia's dark-blue silk pelisse and bonnet and Aunt Maria's dove-colored raiment were, in cut and material, more in accordance with the reigning mode. The combination of red and black, in high favor with our modern fashionists, was regarded fifty years back with peculiar disfavor. Even Mammy had been stirred out of her grave reserve by the sight of Miss Harry's attire when she first exhibited it at Summerfield, waylaying her in the hall to expostulate.

"Miss Harry, my dear young lady, you mustn't be mad with me! I been know you ever sence you was a baby. Honey, what you wear red an' black for? Don't you know it's mournin' for the devil, an' mighty bad luck?"

"Mammy! am I so near of kin to the old gentleman that I should be obliged to mourn for him if he were to be scalded to death in one of his own dinner-pots some day?" said the incorrigible, with a look of affected horror.

No other woman in six counties could have carried off this costume as she did, or indeed looked otherwise than absurd in it.

A cortège of horsemen overtook and accompanied our carriage. Sidney Macon kept his place at the right

hand, pushed hard by his livelier brother Roderick, who talked persistently across him, watching for a chance to slip into closer proximity to the wheels. Mr. Bradley rode nearest the other window. Beyond these skirmished three or four others, flinging merry and gallant sayings to one and all of the three young ladies. Uncle Sterling, disdaining, as he put it, "to enter for a scrub-race," had ridden forward to a neighbor's carriage, and Wythe to join some collegians at home for the holidays. Uncle Archie was at one side of the coach, in which were his mother, aunt and sister; my father riding on the other. They were right behind us, and I, sitting with my back to the horses, watched him with loving, grieving eyes. Miss Virginia always "preferred to ride backward," especially as Aunt Maria was apt to have a headache when she occupied this place. Uncle Archie had a full view of the face, radiant with happy smiles, brilliant with the color brought to the cheeks by the frosty kisses of the wind. I was provoked with him for having tarried to seat the elder ladies, instead of delegating the duty to his brother-in-law and riding on in season to secure the post which was his of right. He nodded smilingly in catching my yearning gaze, but I was not comforted. Nor was I deceived by his brave show of interest in my mother's talk. How was this possible when I was assured that the plump, perfectly-gloved hand laid caressingly on my lap held his heart and destiny?

At the cross-roads the carriage from Hunter's Rest was waiting for us at the side of the highway. The master, in his red coat, had alighted, to hold the door open for his darling's return. His fine gray head was uncovered every half minute in salutation to passers-by; the bridle of his horse hung in the crook of his elbow. Five or six young fellows sprang to the earth with the halting of the Summerfield equipage. The door flew wide, the steps were let down with a flourish, emulous hands were outstretched to assist the beauty's

descent and guard her dress from the muddy wheels. In state that, to my fancy, might wait upon a princess of the blood, she was attended to the cushion over against that occupied by the brace of spinsters in black satin and curled false "fronts," who looked on in iced propriety, agreed for once in their virtuous disapproval of the display of homage to "that spoiled child." Harry waved her hand smilingly as the horses started. Captain Macon bent to his saddle-bow; young heads were bared in farewell obeisances. Roderick and Sidney tarried for a word of adieu and promise for the morrow, then galloped on to join their father, and we turned off into the road leading homeward.

The bustle and ceremony, the festal tone, tempered with decorous remembrance of time and place, attendant upon these returnings from church, were to me, albeit all my life used to them, an unceasing and delicious excitement. It seemed such a grand thing—a life worth living—to be youthful and fair—a cup that never staled, lucent to the dregless depths, in which the minutes were glittering beads, breaking before the rising of others as bright and fresh.

"At last!" I heaved a wordless sigh as Uncle Archie touched his horse with the spur and appeared at Miss Virginia's side.

She looked up in her sweet, ingenuous way straight into his eyes.

"I think," she said, "that I never saw a more brilliantly beautiful girl than Harry Macon. If I were a man, I should fall madly in love with her. I don't see how any man can respect himself who does not. I hope," glancing severely from Mr. Bradley to the Read brothers, "that you all come up to your duty in this regard?"

Aunt Maria's gentle voice answered for them:

"My dear Virginia! what a disaster you are proposing! All three in love at once and with the same woman!"

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

SOME OUT-DOOR NOTES.

I ROAM to-day a king. The whole world is my dominion, for am I not free to go where the edge of the circling globe touches the horizon? I am untrammelled, independent. I am a prince, not among men, but amid nature. The seal of royalty is on my heart. The cattle on the far-off hills are mine to-day, and every insect that darts and dashes in the opal sunshine is a courier of my court. Even the winds of heaven seek me out where I stand, and play upon me and do me homage. Athena is the queen with whom I share the riches of my principality. She comes to greet me, and the daisies—white of purity and glory of golden color—bend at her approach.

There are times in my life when I love the pasture lands the best, when the woods seem close and cramped and stifling. Everything is light in the fields. There is no dark corner where a man can do an evil act or where a guilty one can hide. Here the Prince of Darkness has no sway, and I am given power over him to subdue him. He lurks in the dingy alleys of crowded cities and in filthy tenement houses, where vicious men and women are sunk in degradation. His footsteps,

marked by the deadly nightshade and poisonous viper, have not yet profaned my pasture land. I feel that the place whereon I stand is holy ground.

I am like a ship in the midst of the ocean; and the waving, surging, undulating grass is like a sea of liquid beauty. The crimson clover bends in huge billows, and its fragrance breaks upon me like the refreshing spray of the surf. Which way shall I steer? It makes no difference. In all directions lies the haven of rest, the port of paradise.

I laugh as I notice that the farmer has put a fence around his pasture, as if he could keep me out. He cannot do it any more than I can keep the intangible, undefinable Presence out of my soul. He cannot hold back by bars and rails the sweetness of his pasture land. See how Nature endeavors to conceal the unsightly barrier! Her dainty hands have guided the delicate, transparent tendrils under, over and around, until the fence is covered with the creeping grace of clinging vines. The blackberry sends out its sprays of snowy blossom or ebony fruit to hide the ugly nakedness. Even the lichens and the mosses stretch slowly

out over the rails, and the grasses seem to know that it is their duty to grow higher beside the bars.

I pluck a blackberry, and its warm, acid juice thrills me; its dark wine intoxicates me. I am no longer imprisoned between hot walls nor treading dusty streets. I have returned to the old out-door savagery and wildness. I squeeze a handful of berries, and laugh exultantly at the stain which blackens my hand.

I look to the east, and beyond the horizon I see a great ocean and a city teeming with millions of people. Beyond is the land of the Black Forest; farther on, the broad expanse of a country, cursed with serfdom and undermined by Nihilism; then, Siberian wastes and the ancient Chinese empire; another ocean, its waves beating against a golden shore; and then, my thought traveling faster than electricity, I pass rumbling trains toiling up the mountain side, hurrying down across the prairies, through the cities and over the fields, until I am back again in my pasture land. Thus do I circle the globe and put a girdle round about the earth in less than forty minutes. Do I wish to spend days and nights of weary traveling in the pursuit of something new? Lo! there lights on the mullein stalk before me a butterfly unknown to me before. This teaches me a lesson which my heart is quick to learn.

I am taught another lesson before I leave my pasture land. As I push aside the branches of a blackberry bush to pluck some tempting fruit, I encounter the glistening eyes of a snake. The bird comes to feed on the berry and the snake lies in wait to devour the bird. Nature is pitiless, even to her own. Death is in concealment everywhere, and a serpent has entered my Eden. As I step back a cloud comes over the sun.

If I wish to get entirely away from human company, when out in the woods, I seek the hill-top. Should I, perchance, find the solitude broken by another wanderer, I am sure that he is of the right kind, and that I shall be all the better for my knowledge of him. The persons who generally go into the woods never get farther than the valleys at the foot of the hills. They do not know—they do not care to take the trouble to know—what waits for them at the summit; but they lie down at the base, and eat and drink and are content. To them the glorious lift of the hills is merely a tiresome ascent. They are adventurers and intruders; they have thrust themselves in upon Nature. They are not her children; they offer her a superficial admiration instead of love. Yet she is kind to them, and gives them a cloudless sky, when the tiny rivulet might become a roaring torrent and drown them out like rats!

Up on the summit of this hill, I feel myself above you. You crawl around the base like mice at the foot of a pine tree. The sky, of which you catch a glimpse when the wind sways the overhanging branches of the trees, is visible to you only in small flat patches. I can see the blue arch stretch away, as clear as crystal, until it hides itself behind yonder summit. You are fain to be content when there is the least stirring of the heavy heated air. Come up here with me, and feel the cool touch of the wind that never condescends to the valleys, but sweeps only over the tops of the high hills. I feel it now; it kisses my waiting cheek; it wraps me lovingly in its embrace; it caresses me fondly, as if I were one of its own children.

The air is wonderfully transparent. I can distinguish the feathers of the hawk as he sails majestically through the clear ether. The speck of cloud which is slowly

coming up from the horizon is not hidden from me. Below me I can trace out the rivers and the streams that form the ever-pulsing arteries of Nature's body. At night I am nearer the dazzling stars, flashing their diamond points across the universe. They rise before me and bend over me as if I were their especial care. Their piercing eyes of flame enter my deepest soul. I glory in the silence and darkness. I shout for joy, and listen for the echo to come back to me from the farthest summit.

When the clouds and the mist descend upon the hill-top and twist and twine their damp fingers around me, I am also glad. Then the world is shut out from me, and I am left alone with myself. The joy which is born of solitude is deeper than that which springs from companionship. This deeper joy I know when I am hid by the clouds that cool the heated brow of the high hill.

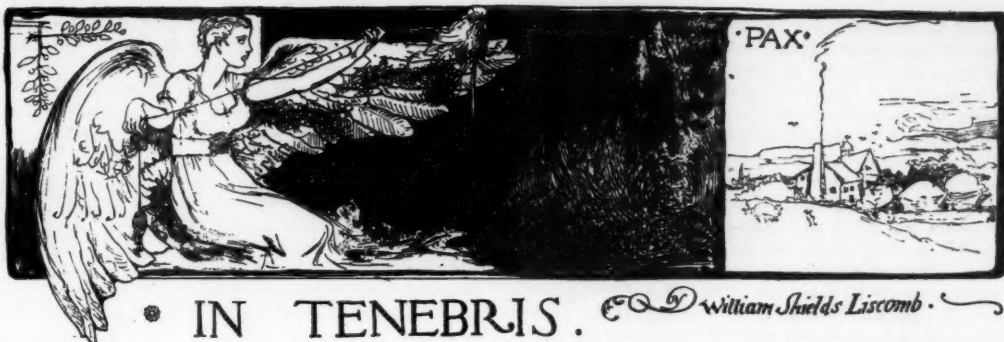
A walk over a country road when the snow is a foot deep on the ground, tests the mettle of the most enthusiastic pedestrian. No longer is there any elasticity in your walk. You must wearily plod, trudging, floundering, pitching headlong here and there. Long before you have reached the first mile-stone you are conscious of a pain in the small of your back. The silence which rests upon the fields makes itself felt. You miss the cheerful rattle of the wheels, nor does your cane strike with a pleasant ring upon the ground. The grit of the gravel has gone. The lively trot of the homeward-going farm-horse has subsided into a weary walk, and the clatter of heavy hoofs is muffled and deadened. The twitter of a distant bird and the voice of a woman calling across the fields from yonder farm-house vibrate to the ear as clear and sharp as the metallic ring of a good coin.

Against the snowy background the branches of the trees are distinctly defined. Here and there the dead grasses protrude above the white surface. Their sharp blades have stabbed the snow. The whole aspect of the earth is changed. A piece of country once perfectly familiar is now unrecognizable, metamorphosed. You are not absolutely certain of your whereabouts. The red-brown leaves of the scarlet oak are conspicuous objects in the otherwise white landscape. The smooth bark of the beech tree, which in summer is noticeable for its grayish-whiteness, is now steel-blue by contrast. Against the fences by the roadside the snow has drifted into great, irregular heaps, plowed with deep furrows by the wind. And as for the fence-rails, surely they have an uncommon beauty when the snow has fallen.

In the crystal meshes of the flakes the particles of dust and minute insects of the air have been caught, as in a fairy net, and borne to earth, leaving the atmosphere pellucid. A mile away, over the river valley, I can see the white tips in the wing of a buzzard. The other side of the river seems near at hand. I can count every rock and every tree on the steep bluff which rises up from the water.

Far in the distance, up the road, a man is moving toward us. Compare his easy motion through the snow to our clumsy steps. He is to the manor born; we are the strangers and intruders now. He is as much at home out here in the snow as a sailor aboard ship. Catch an old tar, if you can, floundering unsteadily because the sea is rough. So this farmer moves easily down the road, planting each foot firmly in the yielding surface, while we find our way with the greatest difficulty.

HENRY LITCHFIELD WEST.



A BLIND old weaver at his sightless task
 Sat toiling patiently, from day to day,
 With faltering hands which dumbly seemed to ask
 The surer guidance of the long-lost ray;

Until the finished web came forth at last.
 Dimly I sit before the loom of life,
 Oft seeing not the web I blindly weave
 Of mingled joy and pain, of peace and strife,



Yet to and fro the noisy shuttle flew,
 Leaving its slender burden as it passed,
 And wearily the slow-wrought fabric grew,

With trembling hands that ill their task achieve;
 Yet, heeding not the spirit's inward throes,
 The shuttle speeds and still the fabric grows.



ROSE OF THE WORLD.

BY JULIA F. MAGRUDER.

I

It was Sunday morning in the little town of Deansville, and, the day being bright and beautiful, the one church open for service was well filled. There was a tradition to the effect that Deansville had once been a populous and prosperous place, but that was before the railroad prospectors had callously passed it by at a distance of forty miles, and left it to sink into serene obscurity.

It was perhaps owing to the provincial fashions and awkward bearings which characterized the members of the congregation now emerging from the dingy old church that Richard Eustace, as he walked along at the side of his little old maiden aunt, representing as he did in every movement of his well-built, well-dressed figure an example of an eminently civilized man, looked anomalous to a degree almost startling.

Outside the church a large family carriage was in waiting. It was dingy and old, like everything else in Deansville, but it was drawn by fine, sturdy horses, and was even yet a handsome equipage. As Mr. Eustace and Miss Moore came down the steps, a gentleman and lady, or, to speak more particularly, an old man and a young girl, were approaching this carriage. The latter had a face and figure that caught the attention of Eustace on the instant. He was in the navy, and had traveled the world over, and a wide experience had made him fastidious, but the appearance of this young lady roused him to the keenest interest. She possessed indeed uncommon grace and beauty, and with them an air of absolute unconsciousness of self. There was, moreover, a certain unusualness about her which prompted the conviction that she was foreign-born and reared. When she had entered the faded old carriage and seated herself by the faded old man, she turned her blooming face toward Eustace and his aunt, and recognized the latter with a gentle bow and smile.

"Who is she?" asked the young man, in a low, eager tone.

"Why, that's Mrs. Armistead," Miss Moore answered. "Isn't she lovely?"

"Mrs. Armistead? What relation to the old Judge?"

"The Judge's wife. Didn't you hear about it? He married her abroad."

Eustace looked at her a moment in stupid, overwhelmed surprise—then:

"It's perfectly monstrous!" he burst forth. "Where were the girl's parents? Who were they to permit such an outrage?"

Little Miss Moore looked mildly amazed.

"I know nothing of the circumstances of the marriage," she said. "Judge Armistead brought her home with him when he returned from Europe, about a year ago, and she's been here ever since. She seems quite happy."

Eustace pursued the subject no farther, but the next morning, according to his custom when visiting Deansville during his leaves, he called upon Judge Armistead, who was an old family friend.

He was received with great cordiality by the old Judge, who presently sent to summon his wife. She came in immediately, making the great old room, with

its sombre furniture and faded hangings, glow with a sudden radiance of youth and beauty. She was dressed with perfect taste and care, as Eustace's practiced eye at once detected. What a strange thing it was to step out of the dullness and decay of such a town as Deansville, and cross a stream and go up a hill and get into such an atmosphere as this! No green young branch of mistletoe, growing alone in the midst of the dry, dead boughs of a leafless old tree, ever looked more restful to the eye and cheering to the heart than did this fair and lovely girl in the midst of her sombre surroundings. Her face in repose was a sad one, perhaps, but now that Eustace saw her animated and interested, she looked so much as if she might be the happy woman Miss Moore had supposed her, that the young man felt an impulse of indignation. That was a feeling that could not exist long, however, in the presence of such exceeding grace and sweetness as hers; and she had in speaking, moreover, a little foreign accent that was equally disarming.

In the midst of their conversation Judge Armistead was summoned by a message into the town to attend to some professional business, to all of which calls he was rigidly punctilious, and so excused himself to Eustace, urging him to remain and dine, saying he would return shortly. Eustace readily consented, and Judge Armistead, as he left the room, said, addressing his wife:

"You must give Richard some music, Rosamond."

"Rosamond!" thought Eustace, musing on the name, while its owner accompanied her husband to the door. "Rosamond! Rose of the world! No other name could have suited so well."

And how delightful the suggestion of the music was! His spirits went up instantly.

"I hope you sing, Mrs. Armistead," he said, as she returned to him. "I should be disappointed if your music were only instrumental."

"Oh yes, I do sing," she answered, in the sweet foreign way that was so lovely. "I have fear I do not but little else. I do love the music; and it is so long since I did not hear of it! Perhaps you have a voice."

Eustace mentally wondered what he would have done with his worthless life if he had been forced to disappoint the eager anticipation of those ardent eyes, and the knowledge of his fine voice gave him at that moment the keenest joy.

"Yes, I have a voice," he said. "How good it is I don't know; but I will let you judge, and I wish, for your sake, it was better."

At her request he sang first, and with her for an accompanist and listener he sang well.

"Oh, you do make me such joy!" she said, as he ended, lifting her hands from the keys to clasp them on her lap. "You have a voice so beautiful, and I do feel it at the heart. I thank you."

There was something so pains-taking and careful in the formulating of her sentences that it gave them a sort of appealing sound, especially when, as now, there was evident in her an emotion which her slight knowledge of the English tongue utterly refused to put into words.

Then she sang to him, and he drew a little apart and watched her as he listened. They were the passionate strains of her own far country that her exquisite voice poured forth, and the young man could only guess at the words, but the look of her face was guarded and quiet no longer. Unknown to herself, the mask had slipped off. Her lips, as they uttered those thrilling strains, quivered with pathetic feeling, and in her grand expressions of yearning and unrest, her head swayed gently from side to side with a motion of appealing sadness.

Eustace, almost holding his breath to listen, saw her start suddenly as she ceased, and press her hands an instant to her breast. Then she turned to him with a remembering smile.

"I have forget myself," she said, moving from the stool and sinking wearily on a sofa. "I have fear that I did do wrong to sing so much. It is not good to me that I sing that music. It makes me to have a great pain here in my side."

Eustace, feverish with anxiety, could find nothing to say, and in a moment more she went on, smiling:

"One should think I am a great—what you call—invalid to hear how I do speak, and it is not this; but I may not to myself hide that to be excited makes me a great pain, and I do sometimes have the fear that my heart is not all well. I would not have that he, my husband, should know it for all the world, and perhaps I did do wrong to say to you so much, but—"

"Indeed you ought to speak of it. You should have advice at once," said Eustace impetuously. "Let me beg you to tell your—to tell Judge Armistead."

"Ah, now you do make me to have sorrow that I did tell you!" she cried. "He should think I was very ill, and it should make him to be unhappy. It must be I do wrong to speak of it all to a stranger, but the music it was that did make—what you call—sympathy between us, and it has been to me so long a burden of the mind. I might not tell my husband, and—there was not any other."

Her tone was not in the very least complaining. It was simply grave and self-contained.

"Pray do not be sorry that you told me," Eustace said. "Perhaps it is not so serious after all. Are you in pain now?"

"Not now—no. It is over, and the pain is not so often now as once it was. Just before my marriage, and when first I am here, it was a very bad thing; but now I can for a long time forget about it. I think it can be I am overgrowing it."

Eustace, in his belief at what she said, passed over the odd little expression she used, but he recalled it afterward with a smile. This was when he was walking home that evening after dinner, at which meal Rosamond had appeared so bright and well that he easily persuaded himself she could not be seriously out of health, knowing how many minor ailments were frequently mistaken for disease of the heart. But this interview, resting as it did on a somewhat confidential basis, gave him a happy feeling of having been trusted and made a friend of from the first, which overleaped an immeasurable space of the distance that lies between new acquaintances.

After this Eustace was a constant visitor at the house on the hill, where he was always cordially welcomed by both master and mistress. With the former he had long games of chess and discussions on political subjects of which Rosamond knew nothing; but she would sit by, listening and sewing, shedding around her a world of comfort by her graceful, easy, satisfactory presence,

and often the evening would wind up with a little music. This was always of a quiet kind, however, and Eustace observed that she avoided such selections as those he had first heard her sing.

The days of the young officer's leave of absence were rapidly gliding by, and still he lingered in Deansville. His first intention had been merely to pay a short visit to his two aunts, who were his nearest relatives, and then return to the rational enjoyments of club-life in the metropolis for the remainder of his leave. Now, however, he found that he had no inclination to leave Deansville. He was much better satisfied here than he could count upon being elsewhere, and so the days counted up to weeks and Christmas was come.

He had been invited to dine with the Armisteads on Christmas day, and he found Rosamond awaiting him in the great drawing-room, which had been opened and heated for the occasion. He had never seen her in a grand toilet before, and so had not realized that even such beauty as hers could be enhanced by rich and effective dressing. She wore a wonderful garment of wine-red velvet, made long and plain; there was neither flounce nor band to break the fine lines in which its heavy folds hung about her tall and beautiful figure. The sleeves were close and tight, and covered almost to the elbow by a cuff of precious lace, turned back from the lovely hands. A deep collar of the same lace, with an upright frill lay around her fine throat, held in place by a pin of shining jewels. Her brown hair was drawn back from her face and coiled in a mass of plaits at the back of her stately little head.

She advanced to meet the young man, without an atom of consciousness, and laid that wonderful white hand in his.

"I am glad you early did come," she said. "No—what is it? I do so often make my words all wrong. I am glad you did early come. Is that it?"

And Eustace, who adored her inaccuracies, mendaciously answered, "Yes."

"Because," she went on, "Judge Armistead did have word that his cousin, who lives in the town, is ill, and he must go to him, as soon as dinner can be."

At this moment Judge Armistead came in and they went immediately to dinner. With what a gentle dignity did Rosamond preside and do the honors of that Christmas feast! What a loyal young wife she was, sitting opposite the old gray-haired judge and explaining all her little foreign Christmas fancies and customs, which were new to both her companions! Eustace thought he had never observed in Rosamond before so much tender reverence for her husband. Even when the meal was ended and he was preparing to go out, she seemed unwilling to be parted from him and suddenly proposed to accompany him a part of the way, and without heeding the half-formed protest in his eyes, she went off to prepare for her walk. In a few minutes she returned, wearing a deep fur coat and a hat to match. Gathering her velvet draperies in her hand she invited Eustace to go also and be her escort back, Judge Armistead having secured his promise to remain for a game of chess in the evening. As they set out together, Eustace noticed that she ran her disengaged hand through her husband's arm and held herself quite close to him.

For some little distance their way lay through their own grounds, but outside, at the foot of the hill, the river ran. For several days it had been frozen hard, and to-day's sunshine had made so little impression upon it that people had been walking across as usual, instead of going a little farther down to the bridge.

When they had nearly reached the river, Judge Armistead paused and proposed that Rosamond and Eustace should return.

"Surely you think not there is danger!" exclaimed Rosamond anxiously.

"Not the least," her husband replied; "but the way down is steep, and I think it would be best for you to turn here."

"Auf wiedersehen!" she said gayly, and as he was turning away she laid her hand on his arm and lifted her face to be kissed. The caress was timidly offered and timidly received, and then Rosamond turned with Eustace and began to ascend the hill; but before they were half way up she stopped suddenly, saying, "We will sit down on the rocks and see him as he goes. I do not feel safe for him."

When they were seated, there fell between them a moment's silence. Rosamond's eyes were fixed upon her husband's tall, spare form, as he moved cautiously down the hillside to the water's edge, and Eustace's were turned upon her face. As he looked, he saw an expression of intense appealingness come into her gentle eyes, and while he was wondering what it might mean, she said in tones of impetuous fervor:

"Oh, is it that he does really love me? I long to be to him some comfort and happiness, for he has been of my life the blessing and the salvation. You do not know! It was of the darkest of my days that he did come, and my home it was not a happy one. My own mother was not long dead, when he, my father, did bring to her place a young wife and together they did wish to make me marry one whom I did hate and fear. He was of a high name and much money, but he was a bad man and a terror to me. I say to them that no—that never should I be married to this man; but they would hear not what I did speak. Then was I at the heart so wretched that I did think it sure death would come, and I did a great deal wish for it, for on earth there was not one who should to me be a friend. And then in that dark time he did come—he, my husband. He did see of all my sadness and say he would give me help, but there was at all no way; but one day when they talk to me so cruel and say I shall be married to the one I did hate, Judge Armistead did come to me and to him I did tell all. And he did say, 'I go to my home far over the great water, and if it will be, you go with me; it is there you shall have of rest and peace, if you will marry me, Rosamond; there is no other way.' It was a strange thing, and at the first I did weep, but he had speak the words rest and peace, and it was for these my soul desired. And I say to him yes, and we were married, and I was glad because that other could make me to fear no more. And so it all was over. And he has been to me ever what he did say, and he has to me give a place of rest and peace, and I weep and fear no more since I am here. I want to know he does a great deal care for me. I am hungry at the heart for this. It was not always there, this—what you call longing. I know not why it is to me come now. It makes me to fear."

During her recital Eustace had listened with an intensity of interest which kept him absolutely still. She had spoken as if more to herself than him, and had kept her gaze fixed upon the river. An unwonted agitation had sprung up in the young man's heart, and a hitherto half-unformed idea—that he ought to separate himself from Rosamond—was asserting itself. Once or twice before a feeble sense of his own danger had come to him, but now he was brought face to face with a possible danger to her, and that was far more appalling. What

was this longing and unrest that was bearing on her heart? Was it not swiftly recognized as akin to the feeling in his own? Perhaps he was unconsciously to be the means of bringing an awful sorrow into her joyless but tranquil life; and this, if any sacrifice of his could make prevention possible, must never be.

In the midst of these hurried reflections there fell upon his ears a faint cracking sound, and in a moment more a hurried glance toward the river showed him the figure of the old Judge as it tottered and fell. Then there came a great crash, and in an instant more the waters had closed above him.

Rosamond uttered a wild cry, and both of them sprang to their feet. She was rushing toward the river, but Eustace caught her arm and held her back.

"Stop!" he said hoarsely. "I will save him. See!"

And as they looked the outlines of a dark arm appeared, clinging to the ice. Eustace turned from her, and in another second was dashing down the slope with great leaps that carried him over the ground like a deer. Only once he turned, and that was when he heard her following.

"Go back!" he cried hoarsely. "Advance one step farther and you cost us both our lives. The ice will not bear."

And Rosamond, standing white and trembling on the shore, watched him with wild, distended eyes as he threw away his hat and coat and strode, lightly and cautiously now, to the side of the opening in the ice. Her hand was clutching at her heart, and her breath came pantingly, but she still stood erect and watched. There came another crash, and the yawning hole spread its jaws still wider as Eustace, too, vanished under the waters before her very eyes. She uttered a loud shriek; the sunlight, the trees, the river swam before her eyes, and she fell to the ground in a death-like swoon.

II

WHEN Rosamond recovered consciousness she was lying in her own room, and the relieved faces of the servants who surrounded her at once quieted her worst fears. She drew herself into a sitting posture, and muttered some hurried inquiries in her own tongue.

"They are both safe, my dear lady," the old housekeeper said. "Mr. Eustace saved the Judge's life. He had lost consciousness, but Mr. Eustace held him up until some men, not far away, heard your cry, and came to the rescue. The doctor is with Judge Armistead, and says there is no serious injury. Mr. Eustace is perfectly well. The doctor told me to tell you to be quiet. Both of them are safe, God be praised!"

Rosamond echoed the words in the sweet foreign tongue that came from her lips so winningly, and then rose and stood on her feet.

"I am well," she said. "The pain is no more. I must go to them."

In spite of all remonstrance, she wrapped herself in a dressing-gown and went at once to her husband. Mr. Eustace, she had been told, needed no care. The shock had been nothing to his youth and strength, but it was not so with the poor old man, whom she found tossing feverishly upon his bed. She sent away the servants, and herself received the doctor's instructions, and learned from him that there was no farther danger, and that if the patient could sleep he would do well. Her heart swelled with gratitude to hear it. She felt a strange sensation of owing him reparation for something, and a great need to serve and work for him. As the doctor was leaving, she asked him to see Mr. Eustace and be sure he needed nothing, and to say to him that

he must not leave the house until she had seen him. Then, excluding every one else from the room, she seated herself by her husband and began to stroke his brow with light, caressing touches that presently soothed him to sleep.

Eustace, meantime, having assumed the dry clothing sent out by his aunts, who had been notified of his peril and escape, was feeling physically as well as he had ever done in his life. What was an icy plunge to his stalwart youth and vigor? It seemed only to have roused him to a new sense of energy and power. During the hour in which he had been alone in this house Eustace had fought a good fight with himself, and had made a resolution which he was feverishly anxious to execute. He distrusted himself, and dreaded the influence of delay upon his resolve. His free will was a temptation to him. The power to do or not to do alarmed him. He felt it necessary to act at once, and so, stepping softly along the deep-carpeted hall he went to the apartment where he had learned from the doctor Mrs. Armistead was with her husband, and knocked softly at the door. There was a moment's stillness, and then he saw the knob turned from within. A moment more and the door opened, and Rosamond came out to him, clad in a long blue gown. She closed the door behind her softly, and turned her radiant face toward him. Her long hair had fallen down and hung in a splendid mass down her back. She looked the embodiment of all sweetness—the full realization of all he had ever dreamed of nobleness and truth in woman.

"He is safe. He sleeps well. Oh, I do thank you!" she said, in her own fervent, touching way; and she stretched out her hands to him, looking a gratitude too deep for speech. Eustace folded them in his—those most sweet hands—and clasped them close and tight.

"Do not thank me; it is nothing," he said, and he wondered to hear his voice shake and quiver so. He had lost control of it, and it sounded strange and unfamiliar to him. "I would thankfully, eagerly do ten times as much to win one feeling of your dear regard. I only feel that I have been most fortunate in being able to give back to you what you value most." He paused an instant and then added: "I must say good-by to you, Mrs. Armistead. Will you tell your husband that I left for him my good wishes and farewell? I shall not see him again."

"It is not that you tell me you will go away!" she cried; and it shook the young man to the depths of his being to see that she started and turned pale.

"Yes, I am going," he said quickly, feeling that this scene must end at once if his good resolutions were to hold. "I shall get a foreign appointment and sail immediately. But don't quite forget me. At some quiet time, when you are free from nearer claims, give me a kind thought. I never can forget the least of the moments I have passed at your side."

He reached out and touched her hand once more. It was cold and tremulous. Then, with a last look at the lovely, agitated face, he turned and left her.

That night Eustace left Deansville, and within a week he had sailed for Japan.

Two years passed, and Eustace having sailed over thousands of acres of water and visited many strange and distant lands, was back in America again at Christmas-time. Soon after he landed he got a letter from his aunts urging him to come to them for the holidays. They had never been in the habit of writing to him during his voyages, and this was the first letter he had received from them since he had left Deansville that

Christmas night two years ago. Miss Moore mentioned, among other items, that Judge Armistead had died shortly after Eustace's departure from Deansville, in consequence of internal injuries received on the occasion of his accident on the river; and she added that Mrs. Armistead was still at the old place.

Eustace set out that day for Deansville, and once there he lost no time in taking the familiar road that led to the house on the hill. He sent in his card to Mrs. Armistead, and entered the well-remembered old room and waited. It was but a little while before she came in to him. Her greeting was quiet and simple in the extreme. Her manner toward him made his heart sink. It was cordial and friendly beyond a doubt, but it was not a whit more. She was glad to see him; she looked as well as said so, but she thought he had only come on a duty visit to his aunts, and spoke most of their joy at having him. And besides all this, he found her strangely altered in appearance. It was not only the black dress that she wore that gave her that pathetic look. The blooming cheeks had grown paler and the ripe lips a trifle more compressed, and the beautiful rounded form was sparer and less buoyant of motion than Eustace remembered it. There is but little doubt that to any other eyes than his she would have appeared less beautiful than of old, though a deeper sweetness had come into her eyes and a tenderer softness to her smile. In one thing she was quite unchanged. She still retained her strong foreign accent and limited English vocabulary, a fact which gave the strongest proof of the utter isolation of her life.

Each succeeding day found Eustace wending his way along the familiar path that led to that quiet old house on the hill that contained the human being on whom he had set every hope and aspiration of his life. She was always glad to see him. Always her frank, sweet, cordial self, and his visits ought to have been unmixedly delightful, instead of which they were agitating, disappointing and even painful. Her very candor and friendliness grated on him and set his worst fears vibrating. Every day he resolved in vain to tell her that what he had to offer her was a very different thing from friendship, as well as what he desired of her in return.

One thing that he observed with surprise was that his aunts never spoke to him of Mrs. Armistead or commented upon his visits to her. Eustace did not know how to account for it, but he felt very grateful to them. He did not want to talk about Mrs. Armistead. He felt too uncertain of their ultimate relation to each other.

It came about very naturally that he spoke to her at last. He had no definite intention of doing so when he went in that evening and took his seat beside her on the sofa, the room half lighted by the bright wood-fire and half by the winter twilight. He had come upon her unexpectedly and found her in an attitude of weariness and dejection that smote him to the heart. He felt a passionate need to comfort and cheer her, and almost before he realized what he was doing he had drawn a little nearer to her and laid his strong hand over hers.

"You are sad and lonely living here alone," he said. "It is not right that no human heart in all the world should know the joy of your companionship. Oh, Rosamond, I claim that happiness! I want you to give your life into my keeping, for no one could ever love you with a love like mine."

He paused. The look of utter incredulity upon her face forbade him to go on. She drew her hand with a quiet motion from under his, and in the old sweet, broken way said hurriedly:

"It may not be that you do mean this! It must be

I do not understand. You will think I have grown dull and stupid since I did not see you; but oh, I know not what you do mean!"

"I mean that I love you, Rosamond, and that I want you to promise to be my dear wife."

She uttered a low cry and hid her face in her hands.

"It cannot ever be," she said sobbingly. "My thought is not to marry ever more. It is all passed by. You know not what you say. You know not the surprise you do make me."

"Forgive me, Rosamond; I have been too hasty; but indeed to be silent any longer was more than I could bear. Look into your own heart, dearest, and tell me if it answers nothing to my great love."

She took her hands from her face and clasped them over her breast.

"You must have pity. You must let me think," she said. "I have not in my heart the power to tell you no, and yet it cannot ever be that I can tell you yes. I know not what it is that I do feel. It is to me a thing so strange and wonderful."

"Rosamond, dearest, I will tell you," he said gently. "Rosamond, it is love. Open your heart to its voice, dear. It will bring you joy and peace at last."

"Love!" she said brokenly; "love that my poets have told me of! love that has come to me in all sweet and noble music, like an echo of a thing it was not for me to know! And has it to me come at the last? I am not of this joy worthy."

"You are worthiest and noblest and best of all women on earth to me," he said ardently. "You will be my own wife, Rosamond. You cannot escape me now."

He bent forward to clasp her in his arms, but she slid from him.

"It cannot ever be," she said, covering her face with her hands. "No, it cannot ever be! And yet it has come to me to know that it is not true I do not love you. No, it cannot ever be, and yet it does make me at the heart so glad! You shall not mind that I do say it. You shall forgive that I do tremble so and weep, but it is to me a thing so sweet to know."

He took her hands in his and drew her upward toward him. She gave herself with a pathetic weakness to his strong embrace, and made no resistance by word or sign. It was warmth and light let in upon him to feel the pressure of her arms about his neck; but when he put a tender hand beneath her face, and turned it upward so that he might see it, it wore a look of piteous sadness that smote him with a sudden terror.

"What is it?" he said, in a hurried, troubled tone. "Oh, Rosamond, what can you mean by this look? what is it you fear if you love me indeed?"

"I do love you," she said, looking into his eyes with a steady gaze; "so much I do love you that now, at last, I do know all what love is—so much that my poor life I would in gladness give for this little time, when I have known indeed to love."

"A little time, my Rosamond? Oh, no! Our two long lives are spread before us joyous and serene. Many years of glorious youth are ours, and after that we will grow old together. Our love will not wear out—it is for life."

"For life?" she said gently. "No more but that? I could not—what you say?—be satisfied with that!"

"You are right," he answered. "You are right, and I was wrong to speak as I did. A wise man has said that anything that can end is too short, and there are times, like this that has come to us, when every one must feel it to be true. But why do you tremble so?

and why are your cheeks so pale? Can you not rest here safe and quiet in my arms?"

"Oh, it is to me a place of rest and joy," she answered eagerly, but with a sort of panting weakness that showed Eustace she had overtaxed her strength, and caused him to say quickly:

"I have been inconsiderate, and have tired you. It was all so sudden and strange. I ought to have thought of it. Let me leave you now and come again to-morrow. Meantime you must teach yourself to be quiet and composed about it. You must think of it as a very natural and simple thing that we are to spend our lives together. I will come back in the morning, and you will tell me then when we may be married and part no more forever. And, Rosamond, when I come then, do not let me find you in these dark, sad clothes. Put on the beautiful velvet dress, with its jewels and laces, and let me see my queen in her royal robes. Will you do it? It will be an earnest to me that my Rosamond greets me as her future husband, in whose eyes she delights to look her fairest and most beautiful."

She gave the promise with a smile that was almost unmixed in its radiant happiness, and he walked homeward pervaded through every sense with the memory of the first kiss of the only woman he had loved.

Christmas morning dawned fair and beautiful. It was a glorious winter day, and Eustace waited with impatience until the time came when he might go to Rosamond. At last, when he was setting out, he stopped to speak to one of his aunts, and mentioned to her that he was going to make an early call on Mrs. Armistead. It was almost the first time her name had been broached between them, and he purposely brought it in now, by way of leading up to future confidences.

Miss Moore looked up quickly.

"Richard," she said, speaking with a grave hesitation, "perhaps I have no right to speak to you on this subject, but I fear you are running the risk of a sad and anxious life. Mrs. Armistead must have told you how broken down she is in health. The trouble is with her heart, and the doctor says she may die in any one of her attacks. I hope there is no thought of a marriage between you."

But Eustace did not hear these last words. With great, eager strides he was walking toward the house he had left yesterday with such fond confidence and was approaching now with such sickening dread. He understood everything now. All that had puzzled him in her conduct was made clear by this terrible revelation. Strange that he should have forgotten that old trouble! But she had never spoken of it after that one mention, and once, when he had ventured to make some inquiries, she had said the symptoms seemed to have disappeared, and he had put the idea from him.

He approached the house quietly, and without ringing, let himself in at the door. He reached the drawing-room and entered it noisily. It was early yet, and he wondered if she would be ready to receive him. Yes, she was there before him! Who can tell what a wild throb of joy came into his heart as, far down at the end of the long apartment, he caught the gleam of a robe of ruby velvet glowing in the winter sunshine! She was seated in a large chair, with her back toward him. He stood still and called her name softly:

"Rosamond!"

But there came no answer.

"Rosamond!" he repeated, moving a step nearer, and feeling a sudden clutch upon his heart.

Again there came no answer. With several hasty strides he reached her side.

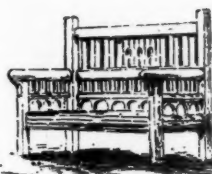
There was the regal robe, the precious lace, the gleaming jewels, as he had asked that they should be; and there, too, was Rosamond, with her beautiful head fallen backward against the velvet cushion of the chair, and her features stamped with a look of such tranquillity as belongs not to this world. The slender hands had closed with a sharp strain upon the arms of the chair; this alone indicated that there had been any struggle. The eyes were closed with a look of ineffable restfulness, and the lips were slightly parted in a smile of supreme content. And Eustace knew that this was

death. And she was the one woman he had loved! His first youth was over now. Love had been late in coming to him, and had come but for once. This was his Rose of the World, and now that she was dead he knew that love could no more be known to him again than the breath of last year's flowers.

But one thing remained—the thought that though they might not know the joy of a long life together, he had made her happy at the hour of passing over the threshold of eternity. Looking on that calm and radiant face he could not doubt it.

ALL OUT-DOORS.—VI.

By E. C. GARDNER, Author of "The House That Jill Built," etc.



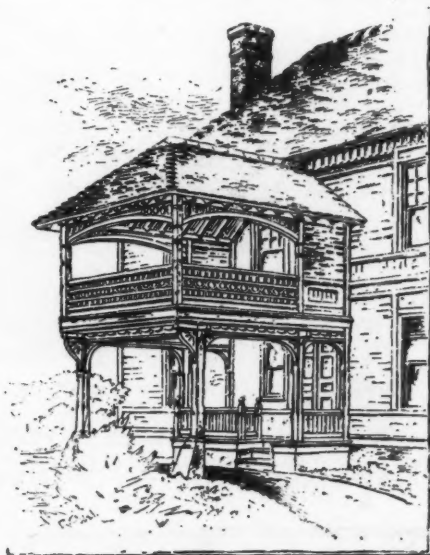
"GIVE US A REST."

EVERY one who has assisted in organizing a society in behalf of some good cause—and it would be hard to find a native American who has not at some time had this valuable experience—knows how much easier it is to begin than to carry on the good work.

The active interest of an entire community cannot be tied for any considerable length of time even to the best of good causes; nor ought it to be: there would then be no room for new enterprises. Still this falling from grace is a grievous disappointment to the unphilosophical enthusiasts who throw themselves with so much zeal into the midst of the strife, drumming up recruits, soliciting funds, making converts, with the glorious feeling that the millennium is dawning and that they are opening the windows to admit the coming rays of its brightness. Philosophers of course understand that no earnest endeavor is ever wasted, that in one way or another each worthy aim accomplishes its best purpose. The village improvement society is sure to be a grand success even if it dies before it is a month old, for the agitation of the subject will open the eyes of the community to faults which had never before been visible, and which can never again be ignored; it will awaken ambitions in the way of public convenience and beauty that will refuse to be quenched; and, what is of vastly more importance than all else, it acknowledges the power and the duty of the citizens to work together for the common good. It is an open confession of the too often forgotten truth that the well-being of each depends on the well-doing of all.

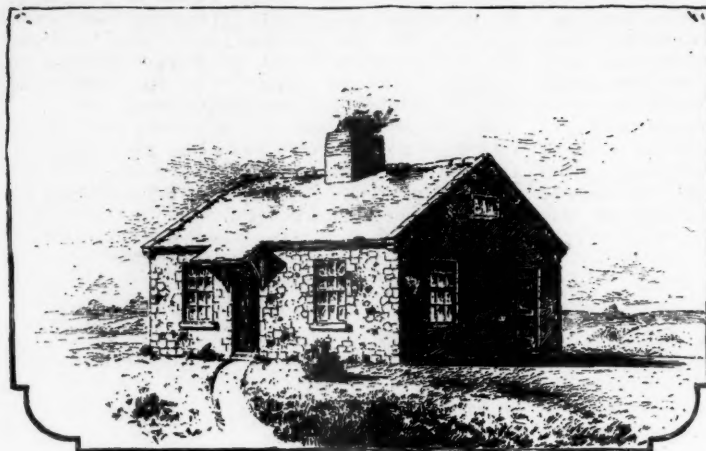
The immediate visible results of John's effort in this direction were the removal from the principal streets of all unsightly rubbish, including the weeds ("weeds" are plants that insist upon growing where they are not wanted), that cannot by any stretch of poetical fancy be considered ornamental, and the building of smooth, dry sidewalks, with an occasional elevated road for pedestrians where the nature of the ground or the depth to be filled prevented the laying of a gravel-walk. It resulted in the preservation of those wild and tangled masses of shrubbery that border with their luxuriant verdure and bloom so many country roadsides, most picturesque and charming hedges, which, in spite of

their beauty, thrifty farmers and stupid highway surveyors are prone to destroy, leaving a blackened mass of half-burned stumps and logs lying around a broken-down fence or a ruined stone wall—this destruction being reckoned a virtuous indication of thrift and good order. After John's attack upon superfluous shade trees, his plea for the preservation of these wild roadside hedges was a surprise to his neighbors; but he described their beauty and the ugliness that followed their destruction so vividly, backing up his argument by illustrations from real life, that the old-fashioned mode of "clearing up" became extremely unpopular.



A PORTE-COCHÈRE WITH A TOP STORY.

Perhaps the most conspicuous change in the general appearance of the village was caused by the removal of the fences that had from its earliest settlement marked the boundary-lines. For fear of exciting an unreasonable opposition, this matter had not been brought forward in the public meeting. John began by removing the old board fence that had stood between him and Mrs. Willoughby, and when the neighbors pressed him



MISS BOKER'S LITTLE STONE HOUSE.

for a description of the new fence he replied diplomatically that he hadn't decided. "The fact is," said he, "I like the looks so well without any fence that if Mrs. Willoughby and I can strike up a trade and agree to live in peace without an offensive and defensive stockade between us, I'm rather inclined to do it."

On the other side fortune favored him, in the shape of an esthetic visitor to Mrs. Smith, who persuaded her ambitious hostess that it was "all the style" to go bareheaded, so to speak, so far as fences were concerned. Like all good examples, this proved contagious, and more effective than any amount of argument, and before the subject had been fairly opened to public discussion so large a portion of the village had put on the appearance of friendliness, mutual confidence and ownership, that the few who

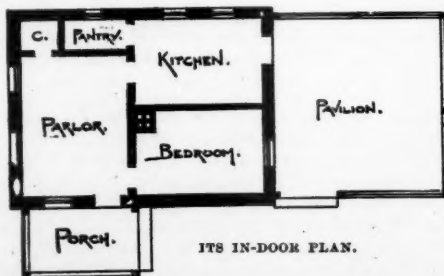
remained were forced in self-defense to remove their barricades, lest their homes should be mistaken for small prisons, truant schools or insane asylums. As a rule, it may be taken for granted that in any country village where it is impracticable or unsafe to remove the fences, there is a culpable lack of good government or order. Good taste and common sense require a visible boundary-line between public and private grounds. The lines of the highways and streets should be distinctly marked by low hedges, curb-stones or some form of fence, the more simple and durable the better. This is especially needed along thoroughfares and where houses stand near the street, but between neighbors there are a hundred good reasons for retaining them.

moving all visible boundaries to one in favor of retaining them.

It was inevitable that a new impulse should be given



THE SAME WITH ADDITIONS.



ITS IN-DOOR PLAN.

to the planting of shade trees. This would have happened under any circumstances, for in the popular estimation the sum and substance of village improvement, its chief end and justification, is planting trees. All the more was this the case after John's too zealous attempt to give the trees already planted a fair chance to attain the perfection of beauty which is only possible to trees or human plants where there is plenty of room, air and sunlight. He contrived, however, to create an amiable rivalry on the subject of variety. Instead of interminable rows of maples, each two and a half inches in diameter at the base and ten feet high, with a one-sided tuft of green leaves at the top, all placed at regular intervals—too far apart to serve as bean-poles, too near together to admit the possibility of natural, healthful growth—he persuaded the tree-planters to get as many kinds as possible of the native, hardy trees, interspersed

with a fair proportion of well-tested foreigners or such as have developed peculiar traits by careful training. Black and white beeches; birches, black, white and yellow; white ash, basswood, hickories, tulip trees and half a dozen kinds of oak; elms, of course; sycamore, poplars and different kinds of willows for the marshy places. For side-dishes, there were horse-chestnuts, cut-leaved birches, purple beeches, silver maples, larches, with now and then an evergreen, and, by way of dessert, a liberal sprinkling of the shrubs that grow so freely in our native forests—sumacs, thorns, viburnums and cornels. They were planted, not in the formal rigid rows prescribed by our New England ancestors, who saw only a hopeless antagonism between Nature and grace, but rather as the good mother herself arranges her groves and woodlands. There was no regularity attempted, except to keep them out of the way of travel along the highways. Sometimes they stood alone, sometimes in careless groups, and not infrequently encroached upon the land of adjacent owners. They were of all ages and of all sizes, from the slender seedlings but three or four years old to those whose trunks were as large as a man's leg.

"I am perfectly willing to work for posterity," said



THE DEACON'S UNREGENERATE HOUSE.

strange that some of the products should be rather astonishing. People of sound culture and intelligence seem to develop all sorts of wisdom and understanding, and to acquire all kinds of sense more easily than a sense of fitness. If a group of trees, a rustic seat, a fountain, a porch, a circular drive, or a bed of scarlet geraniums has a charming effect under certain circum-



A CASE OF OUTWARD CONVERSION.

John; "but when we may just as well plant trees in such shape that they will be beautiful in two years, and still serve to glorify our memories after two thousand, there is a great deal more fun in doing it than there is in leaving them to be nuisances for ten years, and not really worth looking at till we are dead and gone. I don't object to the glory and the gratitude, but when it doesn't cost any more, I go for present comfort also."

His private achievements upon his own ground, which he magnanimously declared belonged more to the public than to himself, brought forth a great variety of fruit, as the seed took root in the minds of his neighbors. Seedlings are uncertain things at best, and it was not

stances, it is assumed that it will be equally charming everywhere. But almost any mistake is better than stagnation and indifference, and from smallest beginnings, like the removal of an old and worthless fence, or the addition of some trifling embellishment to the yard, homesteads that had for years been cheerless and repellent renewed their youth, and rejoiced in outward signs of the affection and respect of their owners.

Deacon Peak was so deeply affected by the new gospel of external beauty that his own house, which belonged to a class of which there are in this country at a moderate estimate seventeen or eighteen millions (more or less), underwent a complete transformation as to its ex-

terior—not a change in its essential structure, scarcely any in the interior, which had not lacked a good degree of homely comfort and pleasant feeling, but on the outside—a genuine conversion. The house, in brief, was like the Deacon himself—clothed with a stiff and formal mannerism that concealed the real excellence within. After his confession of faith in outward comeliness, his neighbors discovered almost as great a change in himself as in the house. Invidious critics of the worldly sort accused the good man of putting on airs and compelling his house to do the same; but this was a mistake. It was simply that the goodness which had been concealed within four ugly walls was allowed to shine through and appear on the outside.

There were balconies on which Mrs. Deacon could sit and sew on pleasant afternoons; where the Deacon could hang a hammock and take his Sunday nap, and where, on rainy days, the children, with their toys, could be out of doors and in the house at the same time. There was a generous porch over the front entrance, and a bay-window added to the dining-room gave needed space for larger hospitality and for flowers.

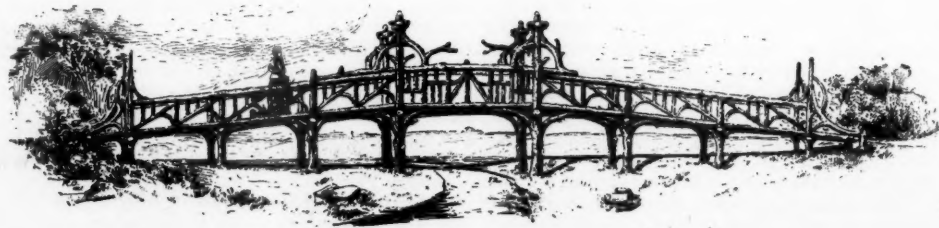
Whatever other peculiarity may distinguish the coming house, it is certain to have at least one outdoor apartment, with a good floor and roof, and so situated in relation to the rest of the house that it will be available as a sitting-room, or parlor, in all but inclement weather. If it happens to be adjacent to a chimney all the better, for in that case a fireplace may be built for it, not to warm up literally all outdoors, but to temper the cold October and evening air in its own little corner. Such a room can easily be provided on one or more sides with movable shades or screens, to keep out the sunlight when it is too bright, or the winds if they are too violent and intrusive, and with such fittings it will be habitable several months of the year. For that time it settles beyond all controversy the question of summer ventilation, and gives to that portion of the household who are doomed to indoor work—to the invalids, to children, and to old folks—nearly the same advantage as the rest enjoy who can go out and stay out as long as they please. It makes for the family a sort of perpetual camping-ground, with the decided advantage of being at all times within easy reach of the base of supplies. The chief objections to this desirable adjunct are the room required on the ground and the expense, to which may be added the minor consideration of appearance—minor in fact, but of grave concern to those of little faith, so few have attained that clear vision which makes everything look well that is well. In regard to the expense, it is almost as difficult to draw the line on the economical side as it is to limit the possible outlay. The only items of in-

evitable expense are the floor and roof; everything else may be of the most primitive and inexpensive sort, and if nothing else can be done, the roof may be of canvass or paper.

Want of room is sometimes a more serious obstacle, but even this can in most cases be overcome, because in real estate, as in law, there is always room in the upper story. For houses that stand upon narrow village lots, too near the street for any addition on the front, and too uncertain and crowded in their rear arrangements for an outside room in that direction, the only chance for it is at the side or on the top. Often the top of a house is the pleasantest part of it, and it is most amazing that all this desirable space in cities and thickly-built towns should be wasted, given up to birds and bats, cats and telephone wires. Wherever on these narrow lots there is room for a drive to the rear it is easy to set posts upon the farther side and carry a light frame across from the second floor of the house, and thus make the extension without encroaching upon the narrow limits of the ground below.

This killing of two birds with one stone, making a *porte-cochère* and a second-story balcony at the same time, was so attractive to Mrs. Smith that it turned the scale in favor of a change. Her stable and carriage-drive were removed to the other side of the house, and Mrs. John rejoiced as an apparent joint-proprietor of the admired summer-house.

As might have been expected Miss Boker's fancy was captivated by the idea of a "sequestered pavilion, rose-embowered and vine-clad" attached to her square little stone house, and when it was explained how the simple roof of the house could be extended without detriment to its appearance, but with quite a contrary effect, her delight and admiration knew no bounds. She even sacrificed without a pang one of the venerable trees that had sheltered her in youth, in order to make room for this bower of beauty. For a wonder the sum set apart for its construction proved sufficient to build also a porch for the front door, and the day the work was completed a change came over the life of the worthy spinster. The porch began it by holding out a constant proffer of hospitality which its mistress was bound to honor. Before she was fairly aware of it she had invited her Sunday-school class to an afternoon tea in the new pavilion, which developed such unexpected charms for this and similar occasions that the Sewing Society soon followed the Sunday-school class, and all through the summer not a week passed without at least one gathering of old or young beneath Miss Boker's hospitable roof. They were the better and happier for it, and as for Angelina herself, she declared that, owing to the pavilion, the summer had been to her "one grand, sweet song."



ACROSS THE DITCH.

KAREN.

BY LEWIS WEST.

EVERY one said that the Sletten saeters were the finest in all the country round. Karen Sletten believed it as she sat looking down to the valley one calm summer evening. She still held her loor in her hand, for she had lingered after calling the cattle home. The maids had milked them and had poured the milk into the wooden vessels, and the cattle-boys had put the animals up for the night. Karen was idle indeed. She leaned a little forward and listened, but she heard only the long, mournful trill of an owl near by. Below, the dusky hills were brightened along their edges with the after-reflections of the late sun, and across the smooth river these rays broke the shadows here and there; but the pine trees were quite black.

"The pines," Karen thought, vaguely, "are like some people: all the sun in the world does not brighten them." She would not have said it; she was a very quiet girl. She rarely spoke, but people declared, "Karen Sletten has thoughts."

To the south there was a wide, deep lake. Several persons had been drowned in it. She had known one of them—a boy, her own age. It was ten years ago that his death had occurred. Just her age. He would have been twenty had he lived. The church stood on the opposite shore; the steeple was dimly visible. There she had rowed with her father and mother, a few weeks before, to the wedding of a dear friend, Helga Lassen. She was five years older than Karen, and she had married Ivar Hansson Vand. A poor match, people said, for Ivar was the most worthless fellow in three parishes.

It was perhaps the crimson sky that sent that quick, rosy flash to Karen's face. Far away the snow-mountains were also flushed. It was certainly not jealousy of Helga—jealousy is pale—and besides, she said to herself: "It is not Ivar I should have chosen."

Hush! Were there not footsteps coming? It was only the rustling of the trees and the indistinct murmurs of the wood insects. The western glow was fading rapidly, and the moon, a great silver lamp, rose steadily over the valley. The owl cried again. Surely there was some one drawing near—closer, closer. The sound broke the silence. Karen started up and hurriedly put the loor to her lips. Then she remembered that the cattle were housed and that it was night, and she let it fall beside her. But now she was no longer rosy, and she trembled a little and looked at the ground.

The footsteps paused, and some one said softly:

"Karen!"

She did not answer, nor did she raise her eyes. He waited a moment and then spoke her name again.

She still kept her eyes away from him, but she whispered:

"Wexel!"

He came a little nearer, and they sat down side by side.

"I am late to-night," he began.

"Yes," she said.

"But I wanted so much to come earlier; but—I could not."

"I wanted you," she murmured, so low that he had to bend closely down to her to catch the words.

For a long time they sat there, and only the night heard what they said. But the next day Wexel went down to Sletten and talked with old Rand, and presently the gossips were saying:

"The very best match that could be thought of! Karen Sletten is to marry Wexel Storm as soon as they come back from the saeters."

Helga Vand came all the way up to the Sletten saeters to tell Karen how good she was. She put both arms around her waist and kissed her a great many times.

"Be very happy!" she said. She did not look quite happy herself.

Karen did not notice it. She saw nothing but Wexel. Amongst the trees, in the meadows, in the sunlight and moonlight, Wexel stood always, looking at her and smiling, with his face leaning toward her. And every morning the dawn was so beautiful, and every night the stars were so many, and the thrushes sang so joyously, and people said:

"It is a wonderful summer."

Karen answering, "Yes," thought to herself: "By-and-by the winter will come;" but when she once was bold enough to say so to Wexel, he laughed a great deal and kissed her. Only once, however. He was almost afraid to touch her. And when they came home from the saeters there was such a merry wedding; and this time it was Karen who sat, smiling from under the silver crown that her grandmother's grandmother had worn, in the bridal boat, and at Sletten there was a splendid feast, and it was known through all the country that Wexel Christenson Storm had married Karen Randsdatter Sletten.

The next year Christen Wexelson was baptized; and a few months after, Einar Storm and Rand Sletten, who had gone away together to a fishing-town for a visit to an old friend, were drowned in a sudden squall. Karen and Wexel were both fatherless now, and as Sletten was much the finest farm, they went to live there with her mother.

There three more sons were born—Ulf and Peer and Fat-Ola, as he was called, being such a stout, awkward, heavy child. Christen had been welcomed as an heir; but Wexel said at Ulf's birth:

"Ah! were it but a daughter!"

Karen had her thoughts, but she did not speak. Indeed, she was as silent with her husband as she had been with her lover. Wexel was a light-hearted young fellow, fond of dancing and feasting and all gayety, and he was not always pleased with this wordlessness, which, not unnaturally, was accompanied by a distaste for his pleasures. Still, he had been married but seven years, and he loved Karen, and the Sletten saeters were the finest in all the country round. Every one said so.

When Christen was nearly eight years old, a girl was born to Wexel, but it died in an hour. He wept with Karen over it, and not long after, finding that the boys were sorrowing for the wee little sister, he drove to the next parish one day, where Helga Vand lived—her husband had left her after six months of the agitations of wedded life—and fetched her little Bertha, who was

some months older than Christen, home with him for a visit. The children were as happy as possible together, and finding the experiment so successful, Wexel often had the child at Sletten.

Karen, in her quiet way, was happy also. Her friend's child perhaps helped her to bear the loss of two more daughters of her own. She said very little, but she showed her love for Bertha in many ways. She embroidered her a scarlet bodice and a silk handkerchief, and she was as patient as an angel about brushing the long curls out of tangle, during which operation their owner, big as she was, always screamed at the top of her lungs.

"Oh, thou cry-baby!" Wexel said, laughing. "Why dost thou scream so? Thou art quiet with me."

"Yes," the child said, "but you do not pull my hair. You smooth it and then you kiss it."

Karen smiled, and she, too, kissed the ringlets.

"How dear she is to me!" she was thinking. "Ah, if my little girls had but lived!" She never spoke of the dead children. She was a woman of so few words.

But her mother was decidedly not of that temperament. Wexel never loved his wife so deeply or admired her silence so much as when he had been talking with old Astrid. He used to go sometimes to weddings and feasting, and on several occasions, Astrid said, he had drunk more—yes, far more—than was good for him. Besides, his place was at home with his wife and his children, tending his stock and taking care of the farm, which was not quite so prosperous as of old. Wexel made use of an expression which it would have been quite as well for Christen not to hear, as he did. He thought going away, not in a very pleasant mood, that mothers were of very little use. His own had died before he could remember her. Karen was very gentle with him when he expressed this conviction to her. He said it with his arm around her, and he added:

"Thou hast not such a tongue, Karen, dearest."

The boys and Bertha were of opinion that a tongue was a good thing to have. What delightful tales the grandmother could tell! All about the sea-fights of the brave Norsemen long, long ago; and about the stern, strong Norse gods and their curious legends; the might of Thor, the beauty of Balder, the craft of Loki, and the awful terror of the serpent that circles the world. The children used to shiver as they listened.

"Grandmother," Fat-Ola said, in a frightened whisper, "thou art certain that they are not true?"

"Surely not," Astrid answered sharply. "The clergyman should have already taught thee better than this! I do not tell them for you to believe, but for your amusement."

"Grandmother," said Bertha, for she took all the family relationships whilst she stayed at Sletten, "they make me feel as cold and shuddering as I do when Ulf rubs snow down my neck. I like best the little stories, that do not frighten. Tell us about the Gertrud-birds."

"Yes, yes," the boys cried. "We saw two old ones—nearly black—to-day."

So Astrid, in a measured, sing-song voice, began the rhyme:

Fair Gertrud stood at her cottage door,
And sang as she kneaded her bread;
"My baking will be but small," she said;
"I would I had made it more!"

And singing, she lifted her shining eyes,
Behold, two strangers passed,
Who paused at the questioning look she cast,
And one of them spake in this wise:

"Good housewife, give to the poor, I pray,
A bit of the dough you knead:
For the love of the blessed God I plead—
We are come from far away.

"We have fasted long; we are faint and worn."
She turned away, and then,
Looking toward them once again,
Broke a bit, and what she'd torn

Rolled to shape it, but lo! it grew
Till it filled the trough to the top.
In wonder fair Gertrud stood. Then, "Stop!"
She said; "'Tis too much for you."

And she pulled from the trough a smaller bit,
And shaped it. The morsel spread
To more than the largest batch of bread
She ever had rolled in it!

From her dough the third bit now she broke.
Oh! strange, though smallest, it grew
To as great a mass as the other two!
Then her heart was hard, and she spoke—

For she thought of the loaves she would haste to bake
From the magic bits she had kept,
On that very night before she slept—
"I have nothing for you to take.

"God prosper you, friends; go on your way—
You may not tarry with me."
Then her greed-blind eyes were opened to see
Whom she forbade to stay.

And the dear Lord Christ her sight perceived,
With St. Peter by His side.
"Oh, Christ, forgive me!" fair Gertrud cried,
But the dear Christ's look was grieved,

And His voice was sorrowful. "I bestowed
The gift of wealth. 'Twas a gift
That hardened thy heart like a curse. I lift
The blessing and give the load

"Of poverty, heavy with trial. From now
Thou shalt wander and hunger and find
Thy food alone between wood and rind."
Fair Gertrud her head did bow,

And bitterly wept. But the dear Lord said:
"A penitent's tears are these.
And such a sorrow doth greatly please
The Father, who is my head.

"Therefore, thy grief is not for aye.
So soon as the plumes of thy back
Are covered and hid with thy mourning black
The sentence shall pass away."

Far into the forest fair Gertrud flew—
A bird upon pinions strong;
And 'twixt wood and rind she sought full long
Her food, till her feathers grew

Blacker than night, and the Lord was glad,
And make her again His own;
For, though poor and troubled, she had shown
She would use the gift she had.

And since the spotted birds, children all
Of Gertrud, peck at the trees,
And are covered with black on their wings, and these
Are the Gertrud-birds we call.

"Ah! Grandmother," said Bertha, "that is the best of all the stories. Ulf, where didst thou see the Gertrud-birds to-day?"

"In the tall tree by the barn," he answered, and Peer observed:

"They were not at all afraid of us; they knew we would not harm them."

"But Christen—" Fat-Ola interposed, stirring a little, so that Bertha cried out:

"Clumsy boy! Canst thou not keep thy feet to thyself, instead of pushing them out against every one?"

"Christen"—Ola went on, drawing the offending feet under his chair, for he was accustomed to these reproofs—"saw a big thrush on a bush yesterday, and he stoned it and killed it; he is going to stuff it for Bertha."

"I hate you, Christen Wexelson!" Bertha cried, beginning to sob. "I hate you, and I will not look at your dead thrush! How couldst thou, Christen! How couldst thou stone a little singing-bird! The father would not have done it!"

Christen set his teeth, but an imprecation on Fat-Ola slipped through them.

"Hush! hush!" old Astrid said, rising. "Bertha, thou must not sob so, it will make thee ill. And Christen, dost thou dare swear to the grandmother! It is the good-for-nothing father who has taught thee. Ulf and Peer, go out to the barn and see if the men have finished work. Thou, Bertha, shalt have a cake, and Christen shalt go to bed for his wickedness."

She led him struggling to his room, undressed him, and tucked him under the bed-clothes. Then she began a reproof. He flung himself about so that it was difficult to continue her exhortations, but she was a persistent woman, and finally she planted herself firmly on his feet and went to the end of her sermon. He was much quieter under this restraint. Bertha, meantime, down stairs, had eaten seven cakes, and when the grandmother returning discovered it, she put her to bed also. Wexel was gone to a wedding.

That night the child, lying awake, heard a faint tapping on the window-pane. She sprang out of bed, and running bare-footed across the floor, threw open the sash. Christen put his head in.

"Bertha!" he whispered. "Lean thy face close to me. I am afraid they will hear us. . . . I will not kill another thrush, because . . . it makes thee cry. I have buried the little one I stoned. . . . Now wilt thou kiss me?"

"No!" said Bertha promptly.

Christen made no further appeal.

"How didst thou get up here?" she asked.

"I slid down from my window and climbed up to thine, and I am holding only by the sill, for the ledge is very narrow under my feet."

"Well, then," she said, "do not stay any longer—hasten! I hear the grandmother coming along the hall."

He scrambled down, climbed to his own room, where the other boys were already asleep, undressed, and was apparently in a peaceful slumber when Astrid went in to look at him. She had small confidence in any of Wexel's sons, she said. Wexel himself did not come home from the wedding until the next afternoon. Karen slept ill that night.

II

THE Sletten saeters were neglected now, Astrid said. There was a great deal of mismanagement. Wexel idled away his time abroad, and Karen took no interest in the farm or the stock—she was not a woman of any business capacity. The maids were sent up alone with the cattle, since there was no daughter in the house, and they were not to be trusted, especially when the lads were as wild as the young fellows of that parish. They were, perhaps, not unlike those of other parishes and other lands, but Astrid was old; she was growing feeble, too, and querulous, and her tongue ran faster than ever.

Wexel often stayed away from home. But Karen went about her work faithfully; caring for the mother and reproofing the boys. Christen was of a roving disposition, and Ulf was cruel. Peer was Ulf's shadow, and Fat-Ola—well, nobody minded Fat-Ola, either by way of praising or blaming him, except, of course, when he made an obstruction of himself, as he often did. Then they cried out against his clumsiness. Astrid disliked him. The boys laughed and his father swore at him. Karen said nothing.

When Christen was fifteen, Helga Vand—whose husband had died a few years after his desertion of her—married again, a wealthy man, and sent for Bertha to live with her. The girl, already grown to be a beauty, now became an heiress, and an excellent match. There was mourning at Sletten when she went away. Old Astrid gave her a blue handkerchief and her own silver clasped hymn-book.

"I have no granddaughter to bequeath it to," she said.

Wexel was at home that day. In fact, he was to drive Bertha to her mother; and when she was ready, and went in the sitting-room to bid Karen good-by, he followed her; and as she stood there, her eyes bright with tears, he put his arms around her and leaned a little over her. Karen watched him. When Bertha kissed her, for the first time she did not return the caress. The boys were at the door and shouted farewell. Christen was not amongst them. The explanatory Fat-Ola said that he had seen him going into the forest.

"Perhaps he will wait for me and bid me good-by on the road," Bertha said, laughing.

"No," Ola answered gravely. "He did not go in the pine woods, but to the opposite ones."

So now there was no girl at Sletten. Karen was more silent, and scarcely noticed the wrong-doings of the boys. Once Wexel, waking at midnight, saw her kneeling by the window. He asked her what she was doing.

"I was thinking," she said in a low tone.

"That is a lie!" he answered her. "Must one kneel by an open window to think?"

"I was praying," she said then.

"For what?" he demanded.

She did not reply.

"Would thou hadst fewer thoughts and more words!" he cried bitterly.

Two years later he looked on his baby daughter.

"My own little daughter," he whispered, and touched her very gently. Karen took the child in her arms.

"Now is my prayer answered," she said, looking long at Wexel. She was so happy that she scarcely grieved when old Astrid died.

"A long life—a quiet death," the pastor said. He was a young man who had recently come to the place. The little Thora was baptized the day of the funeral.

When Karen took up her household cares again she was troubled as she thought of her boys. Christen was seldom at home; he was wandering here and there in the country, and he was loitering about Bertha's new home. Her mother—Helga Petersen now—was not pleased, and scolded Bertha; but it was so evident that the girl thought nothing of him that the matter dropped. She was restless, however, and had little to do with the lads of the neighboring families.

"She is young yet, not eighteen," Helga said, and was satisfied.

Ulf was selfish and brutal. He ill-treated the animals on the farm and abused Peer, who, nevertheless, considered him the embodiment of all excellence. Ola

was short and ungainly, and, it must be admitted, not very clever. His legs were uncontrollable—they ran into everything. The boy kept aloof from the others; they made fun of him. But his clumsy arms held Thora as gently as a woman's, and the awkward legs never stumbled with her. The three older boys quarreled almost constantly, and outstripped their father in cursing. Ulf thought it manly, and Christen wished to relieve his mind. Peer wished to copy Ulf. Fat-Ola sometimes swore privately to see how it felt, but he was too slow and stupid to make a practice of it.

Wexel in these days took to stopping at home with his little daughter. He used to tend her and talk to her, and he reproached Karen that she was so quiet with the child.

"I do not wish her to grow up silent," he said.

Karen shuddered as she saw his pride in the baby. Watching her and caring for her constantly as she did, a terrible fear was growing up in her heart—a fear of which she dared not speak to her husband.

"It seems to me Thora grows very little," he said one day. "I am such an old man I have almost forgotten about the other children."

Karen turned very pale.

"She grows very little, indeed," she answered; and, after a pause: "I am going to dress her now. Let me have her."

She took the child, but she made no movement for a time. Wexel sat looking at her. Presently she said in an indistinct voice:

"I wish to show thee. . . ." She unfastened Thora's dress and drew it down from her shoulders. Wexel leaned forward.

"Look!" she said, with a ghastly calmness. "And last week it was less . . . and the week before still a little less to be seen . . . and in another month . . . in two . . ."

Wexel was on his feet, as pale as Karen, and with his teeth set. He touched the child after he had looked at her a long time.

"My one little daughter deformed!" he said. Then he went out of the room.

After that he rarely noticed her. One day Ulf said that his father had gone over to Helga Petersen's.

It hurt one to see how Karen watched over her baby. It was delicate, and often cried—softly, not like other children. Karen never caressed it or sang to it as other mothers would have done. The little one had always hushed her sobs at the sound of Wexel's violin. He had laid it aside some years after his marriage; but drawing his bow carelessly across it once, and finding that Thora was pleased with it, he often played for her. Now he sold it. Perhaps she missed it. She was nearly a year old, and she did not talk at all, so of course no one could tell how it might be.

Christen could play a little, but three years since he, too, had given it up. He had never cared for the baby. Bertha, he said, seemed nearer to him—they had been so much together. None of the boys could sing. Ulf and Peer were away much of the time. Now and then they were brought home for Karen to tend, having gotten the worst of it in a fight. She nursed them uncomplainingly. Otherwise she let them go their own way, and apparently forgot all about them; but she never forgot Thora for an instant.

It was strange, people said, that Bertha Vand should take so little interest in Sletten, when it had been her home for so long.

"She never comes here now," Karen answered.

That afternoon she took Thora in her arms and went

for a walk. The pine woods were not far away. She had always loved the pines. She went slowly along the path, listening to the twittering of the birds. In the deep silence their voices sounded almost human. A little spotted woodpecker flew up against the bark of a tree. She remembered how old Astrid had told its legend to the children.

"How long ago it seems," she thought, looking far ahead with eyes that yet saw only backward into the past. They saw more in a moment. With a sudden thrill of pain she stood still. Beyond, visible in the distant clearing, Bertha was sitting at the foot of a tree, her face hidden in her hands. She had unbraided her hair, and it hung about her. Wexel, stooping over her, had caught the tangled strands in his hands, and was kissing them again and again.

Thora was asleep in Karen's arms.

"I used to brush the tangle from her curls," she thought. "But I pulled them. . . . Wexel never pulled them . . . he smoothed them . . . and . . . kissed them."

Her own hair was streaked with gray at forty. She turned and went home wearily. Thora was heavy in her arms. But her heart was a heavier weight than the sleeping child.

How long the days were! And yet it was coming winter. Wexel was idle in these times, and did but little work. There was not much hay in the barns, and the crop of corn had been small. Sletten was not the same. The boys took no interest in the farm, and none in the home. A sullen father, a silent mother—what wonder? Each day was like the one before, but each took them nearer the grave, Karen thought. It was a gloomy thought—the winter days were gloomy. To be sure, there were the auroras; the skies were sometimes crimson and the glaciers rook at midnight. But such lights did not come to the dreary hearts at Sletten. There the midnight was black.

Thora began to talk now, and she could walk, very unsteadily. She was two years old, and pitifully misshapen. Karen was stolid and listless—she was growing old fast. The boys were away as much as possible. Wexel drank a good deal, and quarreled with his sons. He paid no attention to Thora, except to show his impatience at her fretful cries, which Karen could never still.

He came in one cold day and found the child crying, as usual. Karen, not attempting to soothe her, stood by the cradle, her eyes bent on her, watching her. Wexel's temper rose. He had been drinking the night before, and he had quarreled with one of the few housemen who yet remained at Sletten.

"I am tired of this fretting and crying and sulkiness she is taught," he said. He looked at the sobbing Thora.

Karen flushed at the rough words, and, above all, at the contemptuous glance.

"Do I teach her to cry?" she said bitterly. "Was it I who gave her that crooked back and the pain of it? I, the teacher! Was it I taught my boys to quarrel and swear? I am sulky! Shall I complain instead of bearing in silence? God knows I have ground for complaint!"

Wexel turned his eyes on her with a slow anger.

"Karen," he said, "we were not meant for husband and wife. I am idle, worthless, fond of brandy—is not that what they say of me? As for you—there is no devil like a silent woman!"

In all their quarrels he had never said "you" to her before.

He went on presently, moving a little toward the doorway:

"Living so ill together we shall be better apart. That is all. I will trouble you no longer." He stood facing her, his hand on the latch. "That is all," he repeated, and waited a moment.

She was quite still. So many thoughts crowded into her mind, but she could not put them into words. The strong repression of the North sealed her lips with an utter silence. She remembered in that moment the six-and-twenty years of her life since she had known him. She remembered the night at the saeters, when he had first found courage to tell her how much he cared for her; and his pride in little Christen and the other boys, and their great sorrow for the three little children who had known no cradle but their narrow wooden coffins; and . . . she remembered Bertha Vand.

The door opened, and then swung back. Wexel was gone. She stood like a stone—heavy, motionless, silent. Thora's sobs grew quieter, and presently she fell asleep, her wan little face all stained with tears.

By-and-by there came a sound of noisy feet. Ulf and Peer rushed in, with Olga hurrying on his fat legs after them.

"Mother," they cried, "what does this mean? Father has fought with Christen and hurt him, and he told us he would go to America. Christen is in the barn; we took him there, but he says no one is to go to him; and the father is gone away in Jens Falsen's cariole. They went toward the pine woods."

Then Karen broke out into such loud crying that the boys were frightened. She went over to the bed and knelt beside the sleeping child. When she saw the tear-marks on her cheeks she wept as if her heart would break.

"So soon, my poor baby!" she said—"so soon!" And she kept sobbing it over and over. "My poor baby! my poor little baby!"

Ola went over to her after awhile and pulled her sleeve.

"Mother," he began, and then paused, for he scarcely knew how to say it. Karen did not stir. "Mother," he repeated, as if the name would help him. Then he put his face close to her ear and whispered, "I am here," and for a time could say nothing more. By-and-by, seeing her still so quiet, for she had stopped crying and was kneeling with her head pressed against little Thora, he found courage to go on. "I am only thirteen," he continued, "and I am stupid, and I am very fat, and my legs do get in the way of everything, yet—" he wanted to say, "I love thee!" but he felt afraid; so he only said once more, "I am here."

Ulf and Peer, meantime, had gone out again.

"I hate to have a woman cry," Ulf, with the majesty of his seventeen years, said; "or a baby either, and Thora is always screaming. I don't wonder at father's going off. I only wish he had taken me along."

"Yes," Peer said, striding along in imitation of his elder brother with some difficulty, for he was not nearly so tall, and found it all but impossible to keep up with the long step. "Is he gone for good, dost thou think?"

"I think so, indeed. Jens will take him probably to the town, and from there he will get to a boat. Peer—"

"Yes."

"What if we were to get away too?"

Peer gave a cry of astonishment.

"We go away?" he said. Then, in a moment, he added, timidly and in a half-ashamed tone: "The mother, Ulf—dost thou not think she will need—"

"What foolishness is this?" Ulf cried out, with an oath. "What has the mother ever done for us? Indif-

ference only she has shown us, and has given us only reproof."

Peer was silent, and then he ventured again.

"When thou wert so hurt last year," he began, "did she not tend thee?"

"Stop!" Ulf exclaimed angrily. "I will hear no more child's talk. Thou, at fifteen, to be so great a fool!"

Peer felt that he could no longer let his youth and tenderness of heart get the better of him.

"I am no greater a fool than thou," he said, with dignity. "And I will go as far as thou wilt dare to go."

"Thou wilt agree to it, then?" Ulf said. "To be sure, we cannot go yet; we must make our plans; and it is best not to speak of it."

Peer was conscious of having righted himself in Ulf's esteem.

Within, Ola still stood by his mother. He touched her neck presently. It was cold, so he went and fetched a woolen handkerchief and began to tie it about her. Karen looked up and drew him on his knees beside her.

"Thou dear son," she said. The lad felt frightened to have her speak so to him. He was only clumsy Fat-Ola, who was always in the way.

"It is so cold outside," he said, hesitatingly. "It is no wonder thou art chilled. Everything is quite frozen. Thou knowest it is midwinter."

"Yes," Karen said, in a trembling voice; "it is midwinter." Then she rose and went out to the barn to look to Christen; but he was gone. When she came back she took Thora, still sleeping, in her arms, and began to walk slowly with her, and to sing the air of *Neckens Polska*. Wexel had sometimes played it on his violin. He had learned it from a Swede he had known. She sang in a faltering voice, but she shed no more tears; and Ola, drowsy with being out in the snow, fell asleep, kneeling by Thora's bed. That night, when Karen took off the woolen kerchief as she was undressing, she kissed it twice and put it carefully away. She lay awake until morning. Her heart was heavy for Christen. She knew where he had gone.

III

HE did not return. A few days later Ulf and Peer brought the news that Bertha Vand had run away from home. There was a great deal of gossip over it; and when it was known that Christen Storm was missing also, every one said they had gone together. Karen was so stern in her silence that no one dared speak to her on the subject. They did not wonder that Wexel had left her. Jens Falsen had brought his story. "It was a quarrel," he said. No man could stand such a woman. The poor little humpbacked girl must have a weary life.

Every night when Karen lay down in her bed she thought, "If I might but die before the morning!" But the cradle stood beside her, and Thora moaned in her sleep at the stirring of the bed-clothes. So her desire faltered and failed on her lips. Every morning the child climbed slowly into Karen's arms, and whispered, "Mother!" And she, clasping her passionately, and feeling the cruel distortion, longed to pray that the baby might die, but she dared not. Ah, no! neither Karen nor Thora might die yet. So the mother went on with her every-day work, and the child grew a little in stature and much in years. Ola, faithful and awkward, tried to take care of the farm, but he was only a boy, and what could he do? Ulf and Peer might have managed it, but now they began to lay their plans for

going away. They said nothing to Karen. To Ola they explained that they intended to go to America to make a fortune like the father and Christen, and Ulf beat him to make him remember a promise not to divulge anything until after their departure. Two days after they had left home—Karen thought nothing of it, they were so often away—the poor boy, frightened and crying childishly with the pain of the unhealed bruises and his dread of the news he must communicate, told her that they were not coming back. But Karen had no more tears to shed. She only thought, bitterly, that they had not even left a farewell for her. She was no longer strong—she had had so much trouble. The pastor tried to help her, but what comfort could he give to a woman who would not speak of her sorrows? He was some years her junior, and he was of a cheerful, happy disposition. He had not known suffering, she thought. He, for his part, was baffled by her reticence.

Thora was not at all silent. Karen was glad of that. She very soon began to try, in her childish way, to please and divert her mother. As she grew older she took some of the work of the house, and she and Ola had many long talks together, in which they endeavored to find some plan for a happier life.

"I am so sickly and deformed," Thora said. "I do not know what more I can do."

"And I am so stupid," honest Ola confessed, "that I cannot manage the men."

Karen saw it. She could not manage, either. She was quite broken. So she sold the Sletten farm, and they went to live in the smallest of the housemen's cottages. She used to hope for a letter from her husband. Perhaps he would remember all they had borne together, and would pardon her fault as she was so willing to pardon his. But many summers and winters went by, and no letter came. Then she began to think that he might come back suddenly. He might have been ill in a foreign land; he might have longed for his home and his wife. She knew it was not Christen with whom Bertha had gone, but she knew so young a woman would not be patient with Wexel as she would. She thought she knew it, at least. She watched all day long at the window, and at every footstep her heart beat quick. But summer and winter that footstep never drew near.

She sent Thora to the pastor, who taught her to read and write. "He must not find his daughter ignorant," she said. She even tried to overcome her silent habits, but that was difficult. She might almost as well have tried to make her blue eyes brown. Still she lost something of her sternness and rigidity. Thora took care of the house, and Ola, now a young man, worked for the owner of their farm.

At last, one day a letter did come. Thora brought it to Karen, and—for the mother's sight was failing—opened it.

"Turn to the end—turn quickly, child," Karen said. "From whom does it come?"

"Thy son," Thora read slowly, "Christen Wexel-son Storm."

"From Christen," Karen said, in a changed voice. "Read it, Thora."

"My dear mother," she began. "I have written to thee twice, and I have received no answer. I am, therefore, afraid thou didst not get my letters. I have to tell thee that the night I went away from home I went to Bertha, and I found she was gone, and father was gone, and I could not rest. I went after them, and reached them just as they met at Christiania—she had

traveled there alone to him. She would not listen to me. But as the father was walking at night about the ship before it sailed and I, too, was there, he slipped and fell into the hold and hurt himself so that after a few hours he died, having suffered great agony. Bertha was in her state-room sleeping, and I took the body back to the town and left it there for burial, and the next morning we sailed, so Bertha never saw him again."

"Wait!" Karen said, in a stifled voice. "'He died, having suffered great agony.' . . . That is fourteen years ago!"

She thought how she had watched and waited fourteen years for the dead. Over her wrinkled cheeks great tears ran. But not for long. It was so much that he had died. Thora went on with the letter.

Bertha had gone to a friend in New York; Christen had kept on to Chicago. There he had been ill and well—had succeeded and failed—and he knew not how it would end.

"I have now no money to send thee," he concluded. "Perhaps thou dost not need it. If Ulf and Peer do but manage the farm, all is well. Ola, too, is now quite grown. Whether little Thora is yet living, I fear almost to ask. To all I send warmest greetings."

"If Ulf and Peer are here," Karen cried; "how is it that they have been so long in America and he does not know it? I do not understand how they could miss one another."

"Perhaps, mother," Thora said, "they are not in the same place."

"But they could ask," Karen said. "There must be people everywhere who could tell them where to find Christen Storm. Thou shalt answer the letter, Thora, and tell him everything."

In the course of the year she did answer it, but she was unused to writing, and the address was so curious that the missive never reached Christen at all, and thus no reply ever came. But Karen would sit for hours holding his letter in her hand. She seldom looked at it—her sight had so failed that, although she was not yet sixty, she could scarcely see at all—but she found much happiness in the mere touching of it.

Her life held nothing more eventful. Nothing ever happened at the houseman's cottage. Year after year went by and brought no change, except that her hair whitened and her sight grew yet more dim, and that Thora was no longer a young woman, and Ola was a middle-aged man. The people of the farm were very kind to her, and Ola was a good, if slow, workman, so they lived comfortably enough.

Once she took a fancy to look through the wooden chest that held her treasures. The sunlight struck the silver wedding-crown so that even her eyes saw it shine. Thora, who was with her, gave a little sob.

"Dear mother," she said, "thou couldst never give it to thy daughter."

"I would not give my daughter away with it," Karen answered. "And there are three of my boys, I know not where—I may yet give it to my granddaughter."

There came a day when something did happen. Karen was resting in the bedroom when she saw Thora standing beside her.

"Mother," she began, "canst thou listen? There is some one—"

Then a figure in the doorway came suddenly forward and fell on his knees beside the bed.

"Mother," he cried, "it is I—it is Peer! I am come back to thee! Wilt thou not welcome me?"

Karen sat up and bent her eyes close to him.

"One of my boys come home!" she said. She looked at him, holding his face in her withered hands. "I should not know thee—my sight is so dim—but I know the voice."

She was very much excited, and Thora had some difficulty in quieting her. When she grew calmer she began asking, still holding his hand, many questions of Peer.

He had been unsuccessful, he told her, and he had at last fallen ill, and had so longed for home that he had sold all his possessions to get a passage to Norway.

"And Ulf?" Karen asked.

"Ulf is not successful, either," Peer said. "It is not in the blood. He is discouraged. He is not so hard as he was, and he is afraid to come home; and of Christen I know nothing. America is so wide a place that it is impossible to find any one there."

"Peer," Karen exclaimed, "write for them. Write for Ulf to come home. His mother asks for him—she asks for him. Say that. And write to Christen. Bring his letter, Thora, that Peer may see where to send one."

So Peer wrote to them both. Christen, however, had left Chicago and gone to New York. He did not get the letter. Ulf, tired of the struggle for life, wearying for fjeld and fjord amongst the Colorado mines, received the precious message at last. He could scarcely get together money enough for his journey. The miners helped him—the rough, unlettered ones—and he started, and, after long weeks, reached the well-known wood-road again. Peer had learned on the way of the sale of the farm, and had been directed to the cottage; but he had forgotten to write this, so Ulf went first to the farm-house.

"In that little houseman's cottage yonder," they told him she lived. "Karen Storm is blind now; it has been coming on for some time."

But the mother did not need to see her son visibly. In her heart his image was distinct.

"Thou wilt stay with me always," she said.

They planned that they should all work for the gard-man.

"I want nothing now," Karen thought, "but my Christen."

She was growing very feeble; she did not sit up for long at a time. In the morning Thora would draw her chair to the sunny window and help her in it. There one day she was sitting—the sons were all at work in the fields, and Thora had gone into the garden—when there was a footstep at the door.

"Who is there?" Karen asked.

No one answered, but the person evidently did not go away.

"Does Karen Storm live here?" a strange, hoarse voice asked.

Karen started—there was something in the tone, and yet—

"Who are you?" she cried. "Who are you? I cannot see . . . I cannot see . . . I am blind! . . ." She rose, quivering, and put out both hands. "Speak! for God's sake, speak!"

Then Christen sprang toward her and caught the frail, aged form in his arms and cried like a child.

"My mother!" he said. "My mother! and so feeble, and blind!"

"And happy," Karen said. "I ask for nothing." She stroked his hair. "My baby!" she murmured. She was thinking of the time when she had held her first-born in her arms. She was blind. She did not see that he was an old man. That night her prayer was very short. All her sons were home.

But the joy was too great for her. She failed rapidly. Of Wexel she only asked once.

"Did he speak of me?" she said.

Christen could only answer her, "No."

She was silent, and then said: "And Bertha?"

"Bertha married many years ago," he replied. His voice faltered, and the lips that were pressed against Karen's hand trembled. He was so old . . . his hair was quite gray.

After that Karen never got up again. She did not suffer at all, and she slept a great deal. All winter long she lay there, uncomplaining, and Thora watched over her. For weeks there was no change. But one day, looking at her, Thora went and called Ola, who was working near by, and sent him for the others. They came into the room, but Karen did not notice them. Finally, she seemed to rouse.

"Are my boys all here?" she asked.

"Yes, mother," Thora answered.

She stretched her hand out gropingly and laid it on Christen's head.

"All at home," she murmured. "All with me once more." She lay quite still for a time. Then she said slowly, "To have reached this moment, the eighty years of my life have been worth living." And presently: "I have been ill a weary time, have I not? It must be far into the summer now."

"Yes, our mother," they told her. "It is midsummer, and the sun is shining without a cloud."

"Midsummer," she repeated very softly. "And it is all dark to me. But the sun is shining, you say?" And so speaking her blind eyes opened to perfect vision and light.

With her coffin, they crossed the lake she had looked at from the Sletten saeters—the lake she had rowed across to her wedding.

"A long life," the aged pastor said; "a quiet death."

WHEN winds were low and bright the summer hours,
Some minstrel, wandering through my garden fair,
Forsook his harp, and left it standing there
With silent strings among the wondering flowers.
With gentle touch to wake its murmurings,
In vain the lily and the rose essayed;
But once the summer wind across it strayed,

And with sweet music throbbed the golden strings.
Whilom my heart had learned no melody,
But in Life's garden hung with silent chord;
And all the days sang no sweet song to me,
Or answered every touch with Care's discord;
Until on dancing feet Love strolled along,—
And all my heart was musical with song.

CHARLES C. MARSHALL.

CARLYLE.

BEFORE the churchyard portal paused

A figure gaunt and gray—
He left his mantle at the gate,
And took his lonely way

Along the gloomy path that led
To one grass-hidden mound,
And softly there he stooped and laid
His face against the ground.

She slept so deeply, did she hear
The broken words he said?
(Oh sweet and sad and holy are
The secrets of the dead!)

What though in life she only knew
His scorn and his despair,
God grant that in that hour she heard
The pathos of his prayer!

God grant that she who suffered saw
The shadows backward roll,
When through the storm of passion shone
The glory of his soul!

No matter if the world beheld
The cynic's frown of hate,
When rising from her grave he took
His mantle at the gate.

E. J. MCPHELM.

THE WHAT-TO-DO CLUB.

BY HELEN CAMPBELL.

CHAPTER VII.

THE Lovering house stood just beyond the church, and Miss Dunbar turned in at the gate, pausing a moment to admire the great bed of lilies of the valley growing luxuriantly under the shadow of a clump of lilacs. No one answered the bell, and she turned away at last, rather sorry not to fulfill her mission while so strongly in the mood, and stooping for a moment over the lilies as she passed. Then a window shot up across the street, and a shrill voice called out:

"They ain't to hum. They're gone to society, down to Dr. Cushing's."

A sudden resolution came to Miss Dunbar. She remembered the notice given out in church last Sunday, and decided that it would afford the easiest opportunity of getting acquainted with the various people who had called, as well as of judging what manner of life they led with one another. The sewing-society in her old Portland life had been one of the dissipations of the week, the evening being unanimously devoted to having a good time, and she walked slowly toward home, where she meant to leave the basket and make some slight change in dress, smiling as she went over certain memories that sprang to life suddenly with the very word "sewing-society."

On the whole, it was rather a mournful scene upon which she entered half an hour later. Molly Cushing, who privately detested sewing-societies, and whose four years at Vassar had set her aside from much of the village life, had yielded to the pressure brought to bear by the Pettis girls and consented to open the pleasant house to whoever chose to come. They had come, the unaccustomed place proving a strong attraction; the rooms were full, and Tryphena, who at intervals put her head in to note the new arrivals, triumphed afresh over Molly, who had said that biscuits for twenty would be more than enough, and had looked in consternation at Tryphena's loaves of cake.

"There is enough for the whole congregation," she had said. "I don't see what you mean, Tryphena. We shall have to live on tipsy-pudding a month to get rid of it all."

"We're more likely to have to send round to the neighbors for more," Miss Huggins answered com-

posedly. "I know folkses' ways, an' I know there's a dozen that's been dyin' to get in here an' see just how things looked. It's ten years since there's been a society in this house, an' Harding told me when he brought the tongues he calculated there'd be as big a turnout as there was to the Convocation supper. Why shouldn't there be? Who'd you oughter know if it ain't your own neighbors that you grew up alongside of? They know you, if you don't know them. For massy's sake, unbend a leetle, an' don't let 'em think you're as bustin' with learnin' as a sassage is with meat, an' too stuck up to speak to 'em!"

Tryphena had privileges, and one was the full speaking of her mind on all occasions. She was a remote cousin of the Doctor's, though the title was never used by either. In fact, Tryphena would have regarded it as a species of profanation, having all the New England woman's devotion to the masculine element of the family. Men were "unaccountable critters," but, after all, less so than her own mysterious sex, who never knew what was good for them, and whose vagaries and uncertainties were not to be tolerated by any well-regulated mind. Men amounted to something. Now and then they were a credit to the family, and if they failed to be, it was the fault of some woman, either mother or wife, whose "shif'lessness" was at the bottom of any degeneracy. Tryphena's animus had increased with years. She made life a burden to the "girl," of whatever nationality that unhappy appendage might be, and tolerated Molly only because she was her father's daughter. But her devotion was so complete, her administration, as a whole, so desirable, that much as Molly wished at moments to revolt, she ended by submission, which brought better results than is always the case in arrangements of this nature. Her father had roused one evening at the sound of an animated debate in the dining-room over the merits of a certain dish Molly wished to try, and which Tryphena at first scorned, then flatly refused to undertake.

"Old ways are good enough for your father an' me," she said vigorously, "an' I ain't goin' to waste time learnin' new ones, that ain't no 'count when they are learned."

"I know father will like it," Molly began.

"I know his ways better 'n you do," broke in Tryphena, but stopped in dismay as the Doctor's tall figure appeared in the doorway.

"Molly is mistress of the house, Tryphena," he said quietly, "and what she wishes is to be done."

Tryphena caught her breath, then turned and marched up stairs without a word, and Molly, who had fled to the office, whistled "See the Conquering Hero Comes" as her father walked placidly back.

"How did you dare to?" she said. "It's an absolute despotism that crushes out personality. I haven't any left, and didn't know you had."

"It's time it waked up," said her father, settling comfortably in his chair. "Tryphena has common sense, and I think she'll come down from her perch when she has studied over it a little. Now, child, translate this bit for me."

Tryphena meditated deeply. She had common sense, and she valued this home, and, to Molly's surprise, she ceased from that time to object to small changes, and preserved a strict silence on some of the views she had made it her business to announce daily. But in such a crisis as the present, she rose to the emergency, and would have rejoiced had the numbers to be fed doubled. The rules of the society allowed only one kind of cake, tea, coffee, biscuit and tongue or ham; but limited as she felt herself to be, each thing was perfect of its kind, and in quantities proportioned to the demand. The supper would be a success. Whether the society could be called so remained yet to be seen.

Miss Dunbar's entrance was the signal for an uprising of all who had called on her, and a stir of interest among all who had not. Mrs. Lovering, the president of the society, a thin-lipped, black-eyed woman, with "faculty" written in every line of her sharp face, smiled graciously on the new comer; and little Mrs. Prentiss, worn and bent in the unceasing struggle to make one dollar do the work of ten, but with a little flush at present which hinted at a delicate prettiness still lingering, though only as suggestion of what had been, shook hands cordially as she had learned to do from long practice as a minister's wife; for cordiality is not a New England grace. On the contrary, in small communities, where social life is at its minimum, there is an atmosphere actually aggressive in character, a challenging of one's right to existence even, until it has been demonstrated beyond a doubt that there is no intention of "putting on airs." Pass this barricade and there is not only friendliness but a willingness to take trouble to make any sacrifice needed save that of the inalienable right to criticize, though swift resentment follows if any outsiders attempt the same process. But distrust is the first instinct, and Miss Dunbar, as she took out her thimble, felt something chilling and uncomfortable in the air, and while inwardly determined to conquer it, like a wise general looked over her ground and measured the force to be overcome.

Mrs. Lovering had given out the work from the great covered basket kept at her house in the intervals between the meetings, and devoted just at present to the household outfit of a bride in St. Alban's who wanted everything "hemmed by hand" and was willing to pay for it. A new church carpet was the object for which the society labored at present, the old one having been darned till it was pronounced a disgrace to any congregation, and so the long seams were attacked with more vigor than usual. Miss Dunbar took a pillow-case and began work, smiling as the Pettis girls beckoned her to the window where they sat by Molly Cushing, who looked nervous and uncomfortable. They were "brown,"

as their father had said—little things, both of them, with bright, vivacious faces, a great deal of manner, and a wild profusion of bangles, ribbons and trimming wherever it could be laid on—gay girls, excessively over-dressed, but looking as if they might be kind-hearted and affectionate. They had graduated at a fashionable school in Montreal, and looked on Molly with almost terror as altogether too wise for practical purposes. Maggy Peters sat near them, determined to feel at ease and indignant that she was not so, but mentally contrasting her dress and her sun-browned hands with the dainty and helpless-looking little fingers of the sisters. Molly's hands were large but beautifully-shaped, firm, warm and white, looking equal to any demand upon them; and Maggy Peters, who still bit her nails when embarrassed, wished she could put her hands behind her, or that somebody would come and sit down there who had had to work as hard as she, and whose knuckles would show it. She had her desire, for Mrs. Prentiss drew her chair nearer them, thus connecting the two groups; and Maggy looked with interest at the swollen knuckles and the great veins, and decided that she should never come to that, and that she really would take more care. She was surprised in a moment to find Miss Dunbar talking to her. People did not speak without an introduction in Lowgate. She saw faces on the way to church every Sunday that she had known all her life, but they never exchanged a word. They went to another church, or perhaps lived far out of town.

There was Grace Dodd now, an illustration of this very fact, sitting with her mother at the other window. They were Methodists, but some quarrel was going on in the church and several had left it for the Episcopal, to be driven back in time by a fresh dispute sure to arise, but the welcome given was hardly warm enough to make them enthusiastic over new surroundings, and they would not come again.

Miss Dunbar asked some questions about a spring half a dozen miles north of them, to which picnic parties occasionally went, and Maggy answered at first confusedly but at last with interest, her round, sensible face growing animated as she talked.

"I want to know all you young people," Miss Dunbar said presently. "My niece is coming by and by, and I must have it bright for her. How many are there of you? I see two or three scattered about. Suppose we collect forces and see what showing we can make."

The Pettis girls looked up in amazement. They had had no intention of speaking to the set in the other room. Grace Dodd was on the border; a farmer's daughter, and so to be tolerated like Maggy Peters, but there were Susan Brown and Anna Perkins, the latter with a blacksmith, the former with a shoemaker, for a father, and Anna Freeman who had just come in from her school; smart of course, but a tavern-keeper's daughter; and Nettie Balch, who had been in a store in St. Alban's and was home now for a vacation. This was shocking. Even Molly, who intended to be very civil to everybody, failed for a moment to respond, and looked with some dismay at Miss Dunbar, who had risen and now put her hand on hers.

"I want to know all my neighbors," she said, "and must depend on you for names."

Molly found herself passing from one to another, the most aggressive faces softening as Miss Dunbar chatted brightly. She made the tour of the room, returning presently, followed by her "gleanings."

"I want you young people right here," she said, settling herself in the midst of them. "You all know one

another of course, and I intend that you shall all know me. I have never been without young people so long before, and shall soon be desperately homesick unless you make up your minds to take me in."

Molly looked on with ill-concealed amazement, but soon with a sense of ease and pleasure she had never expected to feel, in sewing-society or any other social life at home. How it was brought about she could not tell, but soon she was talking busily with Anna Freeman, who had that very day found a fern that had been declared to be impossible in that locality, and who, it proved, was making a collection to send to a German student interested in the northern New England flora.

Molly was an enthusiastic botanist, and forgot entirely, as she listened, that there had ever been a question of precisely where Anna Freeman belonged. It returned slightly, as after an animated discussion as to just what time a certain fern fruited, Anna turned to Miss Finch who had dropped her sewing and was listening intently.

"Susan knows more about it than I do, and she can show you just the place, for she told me in the beginning."

It was a well-meant attempt to draw her into the circle, but Susan was too oppressed by self-consciousness to take advantage of it. Her frightened whitish-blue eyes seemed to grow rounder and wilder, and her face flushed as she stammered something unintelligible and caught up her work again. A slight constraint fell upon them all, and Molly was glad when Tryphena threw open the door into the dining-room and announced that the young folks would have to wait, as the table would hold but thirty, and the older people must be served first. A dreadful silence fell upon them all. Mr. Prentiss, as shadowy and unsubstantial as his wife, asked a blessing, and then tried to make conversation, seconded by Miss Dunbar, who, after much private amazement at the spell that seemed to have settled down, recalled the fact that in her early days, talking at the table had been more or less frowned upon in various families she had been accustomed to visit, the New England mind being given to concentration and making the work of the moment the sole thought for that moment.

"I strove against the stream, and strove in vain;
Let the great river bear me to the main,"

she murmured to herself profanely, after a long season of monosyllables, and turned to the serious business of eating, interrupted in a moment by a catastrophe which, whether designed or otherwise, had one blessed effect in loosening all tongues simultaneously. Mrs. Peters had taken her place with the solemnity which had distinguished the whole course of arranging the party at the table, though she looked dubiously for a moment at the delicate little chair with ebonized back and a straw seat, a pet chair of Molly's, brought from her room to meet the present emergency for seats. She sat down cau-

tiously, starting at a suspicious creak, but soon losing apprehension in a calculation of the number of eggs Tryphena had probably used in the baking. Suddenly, without a sound, she disappeared. The whole thing had collapsed, silently and utterly as the "one-hoss shay," spreading out as perfectly as if witches had suddenly removed every cross-piece, and Mrs. Peters sat there too amazed to rise, but bursting into a laugh as the minister and Mrs. Lovering flew to her aid and lifted her bodily to her feet.

"If that don't beat all," she said, surveying the wreck. "It let me down as easy as a—well, as anything, an' there I was! It's a job for Sybil. I'll take it along home, an' she'll mend it."

"No, indeed," Molly said. "She shall come here. There are several other things that ought to have been attended to, and this will make me think of them."

Mrs. Peters flushed. She wanted to offer to pay for it, but decided that it might give offense, and that fresh butter should be sent in sufficient quantity to be a full equivalent. But Sybil's name had been the signal for an animated discussion, yeas and nays being very evenly divided as to the propriety of her present course. Mrs. Lovering glanced from one to another, her black eyes snapping, but her lips tightly compressed, till Mrs. Freeman's querulous voice said:

"I've made up my mind. 'Tain't fit nor decent for any gal to fly in the face o' Providence that way, an' she wouldn't if she had a mite o' feeling. It's her place to stay to hum, an' not go kitin' round the country with a glue-pot, bold as brass. I never thought the Waites would git as low as that, but pride must have a fall."

Mrs. Lovering drew herself up.

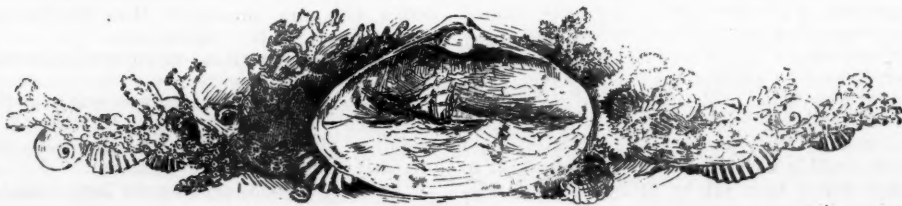
"I'm free to say it's a little out of the common way, but it takes a smart girl to do it, and Sybil Waite has come out as I never thought she would. I don't say I'd want my own child to do it, but I do say it'll be a burning shame and a scandalous disgrace if every living soul that can don't give her all the work she can do; an' the Cap'n says so, too."

"Oh, if the Cap'n says so," Mrs. Freeman made haste to answer, "we all know that settles it to hum and abroad—more to hum than abroad sometimes, according to my mind."

"Nobody has better judgment," said Mr. Prentiss meekly.

"You must come in and see how beautifully she mended my secretary," Miss Dunbar said to Mrs. Freeman, who, partly mollified, partly embarrassed by the unexpected invitation, turned red and dropped her teaspoon. "You must make the most of her while you have her. She is going to make a fine carver, I think," and she proceeded to describe the panel Sybil had labored on so long, the interest rising till her audience veered about, as audiences will, and decided that they had always thought Sybil was something uncommon, and ought to be encouraged.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]





Americanism in Literature.

AN immense amount of twaddle has been written of late on both sides of the water upon what is termed the "American element in literature." This "American element" has been assumed to be the use of an American setting for fictitious characters, the employment of dialectic peculiarities to be met with only in the United States, or the delineation of phases of life peculiar to our civilization and development. More than one profound critic has analyzed this "element" with a sort of pitying regret for its immaturity and incompleteness. One in particular has lately undertaken the novel task of determining the exact amount of "Americanism" in each of our prominent native writers. This author, we are gravely told, has developed one, and that, another peculiar phase of our life, but no one has yet been found who has been entirely American and yet altogether worthy of commendation. The whole idea is absurd. The "American element" in literature is entirely independent of the subject-matter of an author's work and of the nationality of his characters. There is no work of fiction in which the American element is more distinct and appreciable than in Hawthorne's "Marble Faun;" yet the scene is laid in a foreign land, and the characters have hardly a hint of the New World about them. Americanism in literature, properly so styled, is not confined to supplying fresh subjects, furnishing new dialects, developing new incidents, or the proffering unhackneyed scenes to the novelist and poet. "Leatherstocking" has in it really less of the American element than one of James' international series. The American element in literature is simply the American element in our thought. It matters not whether it be in fiction, philosophy or history, that is the true Americanism which is a result of American training and experience. Motley's historical works have infinitely more of this element in them than Prescott's, though the former are all concerned with European subjects and the latter only with American. Mr. Motley's Americanism inspired and illuminated every page of that most vivid of all historical monographs, "John of Barneveldt." None but an American could have written it, because none other has realized the latest resultant influences of the spirit and movement of which the Dutch Republic was one of the myriad sources. On the contrary, any English author of like learning and ability might have written one of Prescott's works, simply because they have no distinctively American tone or quality. It is not, for instance, the American characters of Mr. James that constitute even the major part of that element in his works, but his power of looking at things foreign, as well as domestic, with American eyes. It is a power, no doubt, blunted by his long residence abroad, and evidently growing weaker as his sympathy with the best and purest phases of our western life loses its hold upon him. Yet so far as its superficialities, its manifestations of littleness and greed, and the meaner phases of its aspiration are concerned, no man has a keener insight; and, seek to disguise it as we may, the American element is always the most prominent one in everything he writes. This misap-

prehension of what constitutes Americanism in literature lies at the root of the error which so many English critics have made in regard to our poets and novelists. They seem to think, and do not hesitate to declare in effect, that American literature can only claim credit for distinctiveness in so far as it delineates new and unheard-of phases of character developed in some of the wilds of the New World. A recent writer declares that Lowell exhibits very little "Americanism," except in the "Bigelow Papers." The truth is that his essays and reviews are just as distinctively American, because they abound in views of writers and subjects which are the direct and immediate result of his own American life. Shakespeare was as distinctively English when he revived the times of Cæsar as when he portrayed the jolly knight of Gad's Hill; and Lowell is no less American when he turns the glow of American life on the bard of Avon than when he unmasks the secrets of his own New England. In short, Americanism in literature depends neither on the age, subject nor character which the author attempts to portray, but consists of all those influences that American life and thought have exercised upon his work. The American poet that shall rank with the world's greatest singers may chant only of the heroes of other lands. The coming American novelist may choose to portray the universal humanity only in Old World phases, but they will be distinctively American, because they will view such foreign life from a standpoint peculiarly their own, and will give new interpretations to characters and events which the Old World has but dimly understood and only half appreciated.

PERHAPS the most remarkable collection ever made of brief, pungent and altogether just foreign criticisms of recent American literature is found in a quarter of a column of extracts that recently appeared in the *Tribune*. We reproduce them just as they were given. They should be pasted in the note-book of every American writer who desires to do his part to keep our literature and our life from taking the plunge, which seems inevitable, into the pettiness, insincerity, cynicism and domestic vice that mark even the best examples of the modern French novel. A ceaseless flood of epigram, eternal analysis of the most trivial and insignificant motives, the dalliance with vice as a common and familiar presence, and a belief that life has nothing good or noble in it worth the novelist's while to seek out and portray—these are the dangers to which American fiction is now exposed. With these Gallic weapons it is that our critics, to whom form is everything and thought nothing, recommend our novelists to commit, *hàri-kari*.

"American novelists have been apt in these days, as we have of late had occasion to observe, to overdo the 'analysis' business; the beating out of character (and pretty thin character at that, to borrow an American expression), with an affectation of profound knowledge of it from the inside, to the exclusion of free and pleasant observation of incident and character combined, from the outside. American writers of fiction who by certain works of theirs have gained full and well-deserved recog-

nition on our side of the water as well as theirs, have pushed this dry and empty method to the verge of weariness.—*Saturday Review*.

"In Mr. Arthur Sherburne Hardy, America has produced another subtle analyst of character. 'But Yet a Woman,' with a very rudimentary plot, offers a curious search into the springs of human action. The novelist who throws his strength into the study of character too often displays thought and emotion by description instead of by action. He does not conceal his art, but invites his reader to watch the progress of rough sketches and the tedious mixing of colors. The passer-by may admire the artist's skill, but he cannot rest his eyes on a triumph of art. Mr. Hardy's work suffers from this limitation; it is an anatomical diagram, very clear and very finished, yet still a diagram, rather than a picture of life and manners. The book is a very far-reaching analysis of thought and passion, and absorbs the reader's brain the most when it least touches his heart. The author has one painful mannerism—a passion for making almost every one of his characters talk in epigrams. We look for the puppets, and we see only the showman.—*The Academy*.

"It is not all desirable that adultery should become a favorite subject with English or American novelists. Mrs. Burnett has no doubt done wisely to keep within bounds; but it would have been better to avoid so dangerous a matter altogether. The one dramatic motive of 'Through One Administration' is the danger that Bertha will yield to temptation and fall into dishonor. If she does not, it is because the man she loves is an honest prig, and because nothing happens in a logical and natural way. Such a story is neither artistic nor moral. Touching pitch is not the less foolish because it is handled in a feeble way and to no purpose.—*The Spectator*.

"If evil, and especially a growing confusion of evil, is inevitable, a spirit of toleration, and of ever-growing toleration, is necessary, too. You cannot train yourself too soon to be amused with the evils which no one can uproot. Adapt your eye, then, to the twilight; learn to smile at that which it is useless, and therefore unbecoming, to storm at; teach yourself to look for nothing excellent, but to recognize that which is not excellent—which is, indeed, even less and less excellent—as probably our lot in life. Such is, we should say, Mr. Henry James' inner creed. Such, at least, is the temper of his many delicately-painted pictures of life, and of his criticism of the two great men whose correspondence he so well describes. 'Most life is superficial, all life is a tangle; nothing, then, should put us out; but it is an intellectual duty to expect little, and not to fret, even when we get less than we expect.' The duty of lucid observation and of a low tone of expectation is almost the only duty which, as far as we can see, Mr. Henry James thoroughly and universally approves. A sadder remnant of the old Puritanism it is not easy to conceive.—*The Spectator*."

In delightful contrast with the tendency indicated by the foregoing strictures is "The Princess Amélie," one of the "No Name Series." It has already been noticed in these pages, and we have no intention to speak of it now farther than as one of the most successful refutations of the modern idea of what a novel ought to be. No man or woman can read it without being not only interested and charmed by its subtlety and beauty, but also purified and strengthened by the story of a simple life and a pure love. As the term is usually employed, it is not a novel "with a purpose," but it effects the only purpose which is sufficient to justify the writing of any novel—it makes its reader better. No one can peruse its pages without feeling the influence of a sweet, steadfast, honest life simply and brightly told. As compared with "But Yet a Woman," it is as a moss-rose beside a painted poppy. The one is Nature's self—the other an evident work of art. In the one, life is so deftly drawn that we forget that there must have been an artist; in the other, the work is so cleverly done that we forget the result in admiration of the artist's skill.

THE fight between the "Buzzard" dollar and the Trade dollar goes bravely on. At present the "Buzzard" dollar is a little ahead. People don't like it any better,

but they cannot "boycott" it as they do its big brother. This is not so much on account of the buzzard, it is believed, as because of the pious inscription that surmounts his effigy. It was a bright idea that stamped "In God we trust" across this national attempt to deal in base coin. It needs a good deal of trust in God to accept eighty-five cents' worth of silver for a dollar—more than most people can muster by the wholesale. The Government goes on making dollars according to the latest approved formula—eighty-five cents' worth of silver and fifteen cents' worth of faith—but the trouble is that the people do not quite believe that faith is a reliable equivalent for bullion; so the Government stores up its coinage of two millions a month, and holds them for a rise in faith. It would not take quite so much credulity to float the Trade dollar, but unfortunately it has neither a lie on its face nor a prayer to its back.

THE most farcical thing our government has ever known is the system of investigating committees invented by Mr. Hayes while President, to avoid the trouble of making up his mind whether he would retain a man in office or not. The investigation of an officer's conduct by a tribunal having no legal authority, not competent even to administer an oath, which assumes all the paraphernalia of a court except its power—with a so-called prosecutor and defendant, with lawyers where no law is in force, with witnesses who are not bound to appear or answer questions, or tell the truth unless they see fit to do so—an investigation by such a tribunal is almost as worthy of respect as a mock trial in a moot-court. Neither its conduct nor conclusion is worthy of a moment's consideration. Such an imbecile parade is unworthy of any government. It is the business of the Secretary of the Treasury to make up his mind, by private or personal examination, whether there is any presumptive case against the supervising architect, and if there is, to recommend his removal. Such farces as this serve no purpose except to debase the public service in the popular mind or hide the truth from view. It is an instrument that serves equally well to whitewash or besmirch. It is possible, of course, that its finding may be true, but we have no more assurance that it will be than if the members of the commission were to pitch "heads" and "tails" for the verdict.

IS it not time for laymen to have their say as to the theory and practice of preaching, or rather of pulpit oratory? Distinguished clergymen are yearly invited to deliver a series of lectures on the subject at Yale College under the endowment of the "Lyman Beecher Lectures on Preaching," and every winter since the establishment of the course they have had much to say that is suggestive and wise. Still their lectures smack of the shop, if we may say so. They, as individuals, rarely hear any preaching, and naturally they cannot place themselves in the pews. To be sure, the most prominent lay lecturer on preaching, Colonel "Bob" Ingersoll, has not made a distinguished success of it from the clerical standpoint; but there are lawyers, fully as distinguished as he whose beliefs are not so offensive to church-going people, and whose ideas on the subject would certainly be well worth the hearing. A writer signing himself "Laicus" has written much in the *Christian Union* and elsewhere in this line of thought, but it is an open secret that he is really a minister, whose assumed name has led an unsuspecting public to look upon his ideas with a certain pride, born of supposed fraternity of feeling. We call for a layman as the next lecturer before the Yale Divinity School.

WHAT is known as the "Dezendorf" faction of the Virginia Republicans has named Mr. Blaine as their candidate for 1884. We may be perfectly sure that this move-

ment is not taken with Mr. Blaine's privity or consent. The Dezendorf-straight-out Republicans of Virginia are not a hopeful crowd in which to start a presidential boom. They are about as certain not to have any electoral votes to offer as if they dwelt in Canada, and as a protest against "Bossism" Dezendorf cuts quite as poor a figure as Mahone possibly can. If the Dezendorf committee really favor Mr. Blaine, they did him a very sorry service by seeking to barnacle themselves upon his canvass at this early day.

THE Attorney-General's Office is said to be about to decide whether the Star Route contractors can be prosecuted civilly or not. The fact that this has not been done before is a very pungent comment on the administration of that office.

THE point which will attract most attention in Mr. Phil. Robinson's "Sinners and Saints" is his discussion of the Mormon question, in which he takes a view that certainly has the merit of novelty if nothing more. "Under the Sun" showed qualities which charmed every reader, but whether through haste or the necessity of living up to an acquired reputation, the fun of the present volume is often forced, and the reader made to feel that the author would prefer another style did not circumstances force him to be "as funny as he can." But his descriptive powers are brilliant, and though his animus at times approaches Mrs. Trollope's, he is on the whole a just critic. As before said, however, the pages of most importance are those devoted to the Mormons. He complains that Americans will listen only to anti-Mormon critics, many of whom have never seen either a Mormon or their modes of living, and that three or four individuals alone are responsible for the anti-Mormon agitation. We commend him to "The Fate of Madame La Tour," with its pages of corroborative testimony in notes and appendices, for a side of Mormonism he ignores, but admit the full justice of a portion of his claim, part of which is presented here:

"I have seen, and spoken to, and lived with, Mormon men and women of every class, and never in my life in any Christian country, not even in happy, rural England, have I come in contact with more consistent piety, sobriety and neighborly charity. I say this deliberately. Without a particle of odious sanctimony, these folk are, in their words and actions, as *Christian* as I had ever thought to see men and women. A perpetual spirit of charity seems to possess them, and if the prayers of simple, devout humanity are ever of any avail, it must surely be this wonderful Mormon earnestness in appeals to Heaven. I have often watched Moslems in India praying, and thought then that I had seen the extremity of devotion, but now that I have seen these people on their knees in their kitchens at morning and at night, and heard their old men—men who remember the dark days of the Faith—pour out from their hearts their gratitude for past mercy, their pleas for future protection, I find that I have met with even a more striking form of prayer than I have ever met with before. Equally striking is the universal reverence and affection with which they, quite unconscious of the fact that I was 'taking notes,' spoke of the authorities of their Church. Fear there was none, but respect and love were everywhere. It would be a bold man who, in one of these Mormon hamlets, ventured to repeat the slanders current among Gentiles elsewhere. And it would indeed be a base man who visited these hard-living, trustful men and women, and then went away to calumniate them.

"But it is a fact, and cannot be challenged, that the only people in all Utah who libel these Mormons are either those who are ignorant of them, those who have apostatized (frequently under compulsion) from the Church, or those, the official clique and their sycophants, who have been charged with looking forward to a share of the plunder of the Territorial treasury. On the other hand I know many Gentiles who, though like myself they consider polygamy itself detestable, speak of this people as pat-

terns to themselves in commercial honesty, religious earnestness, and social charity.

"Not less conspicuous is the uniform sincerity in religion. A school and meeting-house is to be found in every settlement, even though there may be only half a dozen families, and beside the regular attendance of the people at weekly services, the private prayers of each household are as punctual as their meals. In these prayers, after the ordinary generalities, the head of the house usually prays for all the authorities of the Church, from the President downward, for the local authorities, for the Church as a body, and the missionaries abroad, for his household and its guest, for the United States, and for Congress, and for all the world that feels kindly toward Mormonism. But quite apart from the matter of their prayers, their manner is very striking, and the scene in a humble house, when a large family meets for prayer—and half the members, finding no article of furniture unoccupied for the orthodox position of devotion, drop into attitudes of natural reverence, kneeling in the middle of the floor—appeals very strongly to the eye of those accustomed to the stereotyped piety of a more advanced civilization.

"One more conspicuous feature of Mormon life is sobriety. I have been the guest of some fifty different households, and only once I was offered even beer. That exception was in a Danish household, where the wife brewed her own 'øl,'—an opaque beverage of home-fermented wheat and home-grown hops—as a curiosity curious, as an 'indulgence' doubtful, as a regular drink impossible. On no other occasion was anything but tea, coffee, milk or water offered. And even tea and coffee, being discouraged by the Church, are but seldom drunk. As a heathen outsider I deplored my beer, and was grateful for coffee; but the rest of the household, in almost every instance, drank *water*. Tobacco is virtually unused. It is used, but so seldom that it does not affect my statement. The spittoon, therefore, though in every room, is behind the door, or in a corner under a piece of furniture. In case it should be needed it is there—like the shotgun up-stairs—but its being called into requisition would be a family event.

"No, let their enemies say what they will, the Mormon settlements are each of them to-day a refutation of the libel that the Mormons are not sincere in their antipathy to strong drink and tobacco. That individual Mormons drink and smoke proves nothing, except that *they* do it. For the great majority of the Mormons, they are strictly sober. I know it to my great inconvenience."

THE brilliant dark eyes, the broad forehead and sensitive mouth of the beautiful engraved head of Elizabeth P. Prentiss, prefixed to the biography by her husband, lately issued by A. D. F. Randolph & Co., are but slight indications of the varied powers and graces of one of the most ardent souls our American life of the nineteenth century has known. Denominational limitations shut her in, and her reputation till near the end of her hard-working life remained that of the successful Sunday-school writer rather than of worker in broader fields. The limitation was, in great degree, her own choice. The daughter of Payson inherited necessarily not only the New England fervor, but the New England conscience. Her gifts she regarded as consecrated to a single purpose, and that a distinctively religious one. Yet from the beginning, when her "Little Susy Books" gave her friends in thousands of homes, and still remain among the best work that has been done for children, to the days of "Stepping Heavenward," and its immense popularity, she showed qualities that evidenced capacity for a finer literary success than she ever achieved. No writer among us had truer or more delicate appreciation of nature, or a slyer or more subtle humor. The pages of the present volume brim with interest. It is a life good to read and ponder, and no matter how thoroughly one may differ from many of her theories and conclusions, the book is closed with gratitude for such a record, and a fresh stimulus toward whatsoever things are true, whatsoever things are lovely and of good report.

(1) SINNERS AND SAINTS. A TOUR ACROSS THE STATES AND ROUND THEM, WITH THREE MONTHS AMONG THE MORMONS. By Phil. Robinson. 12mo, pp. 370, \$1.50. Roberts Brothers, Boston.

(1) LIFE AND LETTERS OF ELIZABETH PRENTISS. Square 12mo, pp. 573, \$2.50.



J. R. OSGOOD & Co. have lately issued Mrs. Dahlgren's society novel, "A Washington Winter."

JOHN WILEY & SONS have brought out a very pretty edition of Miss Alexander's "Story of Ida," made famous in advance by Ruskin's rare and ungrudging praise.

"WIDE AWAKE," which has distanced all competitors in certain directions, is to have a serial story from Mrs. Whitney with the rather remarkable title of "Buttered Crusts."

HAVING completed the beautiful and most satisfactory Riverside edition of Hawthorne's works, Houghton, Mifflin & Co. propose to publish an *édition de luxe* of the works of Jonathan Swift, in nineteen volumes. But two hundred and fifty sets will be printed.

MR. H. C. BUNNER, best known as a humorous writer, and as the versatile editor of *Puck*, has written a novel, to be brought out in the autumn by J. R. Osgood & Co. The same firm will soon publish another novel by Miss Blanche Howard, author of "One Summer."

THE American School of Archæology at Athens has concluded its first year. The director, Prof. William W. Goodwin, of Harvard, returns to America, having started from Athens with his wife on the first of June. The director for next year will be Prof. L. R. Packard, of Yale, who has received a furlough for this service.

THE Greek sculptures from Epidauros, whose discovery was noticed in THE CONTINENT of January 10, have been brought to Athens and deposited in the Museum of the Archæological Society. The chief statues are two Nereids mounted on sea-horses, a torso of the goddess of Victory, and two Amazons, one on horseback assailing an enemy, and the other falling from her horse.

MR. RUSKIN, in the last number of "Fors Clavigera," argues strenuously and most reasonably in favor of long engagements between man and maid—three years as a minimum and seven as a maximum. It is certain that under such arrangement there would be some opportunity for real acquaintance, and less chance of the immediate shipwreck than seems the portion of so many marriages.

"UP FROM THE CAPE," a summer novel, just issued by Estes & Lauriat, is a sketch rather than a novel, but contains some excellent portraiture. The moral is prominent—a trifle too much so—but the lesson of work and a contented mind is a good one, and there is sufficient humor and character in the pleasant pages to make the reader submit willingly to exhortation. (16mo., pp. 240, \$1.00).

MR. HENRY GREER, of the New York College of Electrical Engineering, is the editor of a volume entitled "Recent Wonders in Electricity," etc., which sums up the latest discoveries and experiments in this wonderful field. Much of it reads like bits from the "Arabian Nights," and there is a surety in the mind that this is but the beginning of marvels undreamed of but possible in a very near future. (8vo, pp. 168, \$2.00).

ANTI-TOBACCONISTS will find themselves strongly supported by a new edition of Dr. William Alcott's little book, "Tobacco: Its Effects on the Human System," popular many years ago, and enlarged by Mr. Nelson Sizer, who has added some of the latest points made

against the tobacco habit. The book shows the effects of tobacco on the teeth, on the voice, and on the special senses; also its effect on the appetite and digestion, and how it leads to various diseases; its effect on the intellect and morals, and points out those who are suffering most from its use. (Paper, pp. 150, 25 cents; Fowler & Wells, New York).

"THE ART INTERCHANGE" has come to its eleventh volume, with the steadily-increasing popularity which its substantial merit deserves. It has quadrupled the original number of pages, and added department after department, the literary quality keeping pace with the practical, till it stands at the head of all similar publications. With January, 1884, will begin the publication at intervals of one month—making twelve in the course of a year—of studies in color. These will include flower and figure subjects, and each design will be in several colors. The designs, which are to be the work of well-known artists (whose names will be duly announced) are intended as studies in color, and will be equally valuable to the embroiderer and the painter.

MR. RUSKIN, who, though captious, is the truest and profoundest of living art critics, has a deep admiration for Miss Francesca Alexander, and it has not declined with his purchase of the volume in which she has collected and illustrated the legends of Tuscany. He exhibited not long ago twenty drawings in pen and ink by Miss Alexander, at the same time expressing his opinion of them in a lecture. "I have never," he said, "until to-day dared to call my friends and my neighbors together to rejoice with me over any recovered good or rekindled hope. Both in fear and much thankfulness, I have done so now; yet not to tell you of any poor little piece of upgathered silver of my own, but to show you the fine gold which has been strangely trusted to me, and which before was a treasure hid in a mountain-field of Tuscany; and I am not worthy to bring it to you, and I can't say what I feel about it, and am only going to tell you simply what it is and how it came into my hands, and to leave you to have your joy of it."

AFTER the various analytical and generally heartrending novels which the season has poured out, it is delightful to encounter anything of the nature of Mr. Augustus Hoppin's "A Fashionable Sufferer, or Chapters from Life's Comedy." The "Sufferer" is a victim of nervous prostration, chiefly imaginary, and the story is an appeal to all who are merely fanciful invalids to shake off their enemy and return to natural life and natural thought. The beautiful "Nervous Exhaustionist," who figures as "N. E.," is of course the heroine, the hero being Cynicus Douce, a bachelor of decided views, whose papers on various topics form the substance of the book, the story being merely a thread to hang them on. The most amusing and suggestive thing in the book is the report of a sermon by the Rev. Ambrose St. Julien, a young Ritualistic preacher, on the exclusiveness of Christ, from the text, "And seeing the multitude He went up into a mountain." The exquisite absurdity of the deductions from the argument has very seldom been equaled, and there is positive genius in the way the whole subject is handled. The volume is illustrated by Mr. Hoppin, and will be the most charming of summer companions. (12mo, pp. 246, \$1.50; Houghton, Mifflin & Co., Boston).

THE death of Mr. William Spottiswoode is a very serious loss to the scientific as well as literary life of England. He had been president of the Royal Society only four years, but it did not add to his real distinction. Mr. Smalley writes of him: "The range of Mr. Spottiswoode's scientific studies must be left for his colleagues to describe. I can only add that he was not less eminent in physics than in pure mathematics. He originated methods in both, and without original work of very high merit it

is needless to say the scientific world would never have accepted him as a chief. In electrical studies he went very far, and in his researches on the polarization of light he had perhaps no rival. His activity led him into fields remote from those where he was best known. The whole scheme of modern science, the history of its progress, the relation between its various departments, were familiar to him. He was a traveler, and wrote on the application of the Calculus of Probabilities to Physical Geography. One of the few popular books he ever published was a narrative of a journey through Eastern Russia in 1856. He was a skilled astronomer and skilled linguist, and it is recorded of him that the Asiatic Society endeavored to induce him to edit a great work on oriental astronomy, for which his mathematical knowledge and his familiarity with oriental languages alike fitted him."

DAUDET's collected writings are soon to be published in Paris, and he contributes to the sixth volume a preface in his most charming vein, with the intention of allaying the wrath of the Tarasconese who were filled with a fury of indignation at the sayings and doings of one of his heroes, Tartarin de Tarascon, in a novel published in 1869. He writes: "Looking to-day, after so many years, at the book and its mad, wild style, I seem to recognize in it youth, life and truth; yes, truth—truth of a southern warmth which exaggerates and enlarges, but never lies, and always talks in *Tarasconades*. The diction, true enough, is neither refined nor crisp; it resembles more the manner of my hero, his volubility and animated gesticulation. However much I admire a fine style, a harmonious and picturesque language, I must confess that these, according to my opinion, are not the main objects of a writer of fiction. His joy it is to create life-like beings, to invent types, characters which will move in the world with the name, the features and characteristics given to them by their author, and which, whether inspiring love or hate, will be talked about by people without recalling to their minds the author or his name. For my part I always am deeply moved whenever I hear my neighbor in the life of politics, or the circles of society, or the assembly of artists, say: 'Tis a Tartarin . . . a Monparon . . . a Delobelle.' A tremor of joy overcomes me then, and I feel like a father who, hid among the crowd, hears the plaudits greeting his son, and who feels like exclaiming above the heads of the multitude, 'Tis my child! Tis my child!'"

Four illustrated holiday books are already announced by Roberts Brothers, all of them made up of old favorites, and the *Publishers' Weekly* describes them in full: "We are to have Gray's 'Elegy in a Country Churchyard,' with thirty designs by Harry Fenn, drawn especially for this edition, many of them being sketches of Stoke Pogis, the scene of the poem. A unique feature is the reprinting of some verses printed in earlier editions and subsequently rejected, one of which furnishes the subject for the frontispiece. This will be known as the 'Harry Fenn edition,' and will be issued in six varieties of binding, from a paper cover to the most sumptuous holiday attire. Jean Ingelow's 'High Tide' ('the finest ballad of our time'), the next on the list, has been in preparation for a long time, and will be illustrated from original designs by Church and other artists, engraved by Andrew, and printed by John Wilson & Son. This will be issued in two royal 8vo editions, one bound in cloth, beveled boards, gilt and gilt edge, the other bound in morocco and calf. John Henry Newman's sweet hymn, 'Lead, Kindly Light,' illustrated by William St. John Harper and George R. Halm, engraved by Andrew, and printed in brown and black ink on alternate pages, is promised in three styles of binding. Lord Houghton's 'Good-Night and Good-Morning,' that catching poem beginning, 'A fair little girl sat under a tree, sewing as long as her eyes could see,' will have etchings and illuminations by Walter Severn, and form a series

of six designs in illuminated covers, tied with ribbons and cords, and securely enveloped. These several treasures cannot fail to meet a hearty welcome from our most artistic critics."

THE "Standard Library" gives a large amount of reading for very little money, and as a rule the quality is excellent. "Successful Men of To-Day" has a certain interest, as all glimpses into real life are likely to have; but it is so evidently "made to sell," that the record is vitiated from this very fact. The author, Mr. Wilbur F. Crafts, who has written several very popular books, sent out a printed list of eight questions, replies to which were received from over five hundred persons. The book will undoubtedly be popular, but it is certain that no laws for success can be laid down, any attempt to follow fixed rules being the destruction of the individuality that is the keynote of real success. One reply, by a man whose life has held many prizes, may be quoted as not strictly in the ordinary line of Mr. Crafts' answers, and relegated to fine type probably for that reason:

"MY DEAR SIR: I would be glad to answer the inclosed inquiries, if I did not regard them as misleading, vague, and, if published, harmful, especially to the young. These rules for success in life are like formularies for breaking the bank at faro. In my judgment, few men know why they have succeeded, and if they did, the same causes would not bring success to others. Again, your idea of success and mine might be different. Of those who have made great fortunes, very few would admit that lying and cheating were the 'chief elements' of their success. Yet every lawyer knows it to be true. Take my own case. I think my success is due (such as it is) chiefly to a good stomach and an aptitude for folly. Yet you would not commend bull-headed, blind-eyed foolishness to your young inquirers for the short cut to the top of the hill. Again, such statistics are mischievous because they are the wrong kind of data. What we call success is always exceptional. Usually in such cases the men, the means and the opportunity are exceptional. Very rich men are simply monsters. So are great statesmen and generals and authors. We may trace their growth and find out some of its causes, but you cannot deduce therefrom the elements of a *posset* that shall make others to grow up like them. Again, I don't know your idea of what constitutes failure—'numerous failures.' If you mean business collapse, I should say it generally resulted from carrying too big a load. From your use of the term 'professional,' I suppose you mean more, though I don't know about a professional man falling if he works, keeps sober, and sleeps at home. Lawyers, ministers and doctors live on the sins of the people, and, of course, grow fat with reasonable exertion, unless the competition is too great. It requires real genius to fail in either of these walks of life. But the failure itself is almost as often success as otherwise. Every man who makes a fortune has been more than once a bankrupt, if the truth were known. Grant's failure as a subaltern made him commander-in-chief, and, for myself, my failure to accomplish what I set out to do, led me to do what I never had aspired to.

Yours respectfully,

(Paper, pp. 276, 25 cents; Funk & Wagnalls, New York).

NEW BOOKS.

ALICE; or, The Wages of Sin. A Novel. By F. W. Pangborn. Paper, pp. 119, 20 cents. Charles T. Dillingham, New York.

THE LIFE OF SCHILLER. By Heinrich Düntzer. Translated by Percy E. Pinkerton. With Authentic Illustrations and Fac-similes. 12mo, pp. 455. \$2.00. Macmillan & Co., London and New York.

THE SCIENCE OF ENGLISH VERSE. By Sidney Lanier. 12mo, pp. 315. \$2.00. Charles Scribner's Sons.

STUDIES IN LITERATURE. Topics of the Time, III. Edited by Titus Munson Coan. Paper, pp. 267, 25 cents. G. P. Putnam's Sons.

THE ELZEVR LIBRARY. DEMOSTHENES, by Rev. W. J. Brodribb, 30 cents. PEARLS OF THE FAITH, or Islam's Rosary, by Edwin Arnold, 30 cents. SCIENCE SERIES, Vol. I, 25 cents. THE GREAT BRIDGE, 25 cents. PLATO, by Clifton W. Collins, 30 cents. THE INDIAN SONG OF SONGS, by Edwin Arnold, 25 cents. LIFE AND CHARACTER OF PETER COOPER, by G. Edwards Lester, 25 cents. THE LIFE OF ALEXANDER H. STEPHENS, by Frank H. Norton, 25 cents. ARISTOTLE, by Sir Alexander Grant, 30 cents. John B. Alden, publisher, New York.



A HOPEFUL OUTLOOK FOR THE EMANCIPATION OF WOMAN.

(Woman's Journal please copy.)

The solitary Eligible Young Man of the Mountain House has just returned from a fatiguing pedestrian tour. (Gone three days: distance traveled fifteen miles.) He is not left in doubt as to whether he has been missed. [Suggested to the artist by a young lady who ought to have been better employed.]

How to Choose a Profession.

GEORGE.—So you are thinking of becoming a proof-reader, George, and seek a little advice as to the necessary attainments? Well, in the first place, you want to be sure that you have naturally a quick eye for typographical errors. To ascertain this, it is a good plan to do nothing for a few months but read current publications, and mark all the mistakes you can find in red ink. If you average ten obvious errors to a page of *The Century*, *Harper's Monthly* and *THE CONTINENT*, you may assume that you have a tolerably quick eye for such irregularities.

Secondly, go into a printing-office and learn to be an accomplished compositor. When you can tell bourgeois from brevier every time without placing them alongside one another, you may graduate.

Thirdly, cultivate the habit of reading mechanically—that is, consider each word by itself, without any reference whatever to the sense, grammar or flow of language. At the same time, it is necessary to keep a close watch of the sequence of ideas, derivative and etymological meaning of words, logic, rhetoric, cadences, and, in the case of poetry, of meter, rhythm, ictus, accent and true rhyme, bearing in mind the necessity of never overlooking defective or broken letters, wrong fonts or commas without tails or involved quotations. By the time you have learned to do all this, you may hope to fill a position on a country paper with reasonable success, and after working ten hours a day you can spend your spare time in completing your education as a P. R.

An intimate acquaintance with general literature is in-

dispensable, also a thorough knowledge of history, geography and the arts and sciences. For light reading of evenings, Webster, Worcester, Stormunth and Skeat are to be recommended in the dictionary line, while Allibone's "Authors," Wheeler's "Who Wrote It?" Grant White's "Words and Their Uses," Roget's "Thesaurus" and the various encyclopedias are incidentals of the course.

All the languages, living and dead, are likely to be quoted, or to be pretended to be quoted in the copy, but authors generally leave it to the P. R. to look out for the accuracy of the quotation, and their own inaccuracy is generally in direct proportion to the emphasis with which they insist that copy shall be closely followed.

It is very important to have the politics of the day at your fingers'-ends, as the mis-spelling of any man's name who has ever held office or been nominated for one is a fatal mistake.

You will see by this time, dear George, that you have chosen an easy and honorable path to success. We have not named all the accomplishments of a really first-class P. R., but we assume that you have by nature the cardinal virtues of patience, godliness, and the rest. When you are able to fill the bill as above indicated, we will undertake to guarantee you steady employment for twelve hours a day, seven days in a week, at ten dollars a week to begin with.

Now that you know what is expected of you, you will not hesitate a moment between the learned professions and a pleasant and lucrative employment like proof-reading.

LARS PORRENA.

